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**SHAKESPEARE, JONSON, AND WILKINS
AS BORROWERS**

SHAKESPEARE, JONSON, AND WILKINS AS BORROWERS

*A Study in Elizabethan Dramatic Origins and
Imitations*

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

By

PERCY ALLEN

Author of "The Stage Life of Mrs. Stirling," etc.

With an Introduction

By

R. P. COWL

Author of "The Theory of Poetry in England," etc.

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I have to thank several friends for valued counsel, information, and advice, especially Mr. R. P. Cowl, late Professor of English Literature in Bristol University, and editor of *Henry IV*, in the "Arden" edition of Shakespeare, who has kindly read the MS. and written an introduction, and whose specialized knowledge, and balanced judgment, upon this difficult problem of Elizabethan borrowings, has been of great service to me, particularly in elucidating the origin and authorship of *Pericles*, concerning which he first put me on what I believe to be the right track. My talks with him were as agreeable as they were helpful.

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In thanking these scholars, very warmly, for their valuable help, I must make it clear that they do not necessarily subscribe to all the views put forward in these pages.

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INTRODUCTION

By R. P. COWL

MR. ALLEN'S book is of interest as the first attempt that has been made, apparently, by a dramatic critic to apply his knowledge and experience of the theatre to the solution of problems that have been left hitherto in the hands of Shakespearean scholars. On this ground it should receive a welcome. Shakespearean scholarship has great achievements to its credit, but it will be admitted by its greatest admirers that it suffers from a certain want of interest in the technique of stage-craft. A play may be appraised as literature, but if it has been written for presentation on a stage, the interpretation of it will be incomplete that fails to take account of the effect it was intended to produce in representation, or of the *rapproch* that formerly at least existed between the author and his audience. To such aspects of the play—and to the histrionic imagination at work behind it—the dramatic critic is necessarily sensitive and he may therefore be expected to discover qualities in a play that escape the attention of the scholar. Mr. Allen has the further claim on our gratitude that he has laboured in a field of investigation in which he has had few precursors. In his study of the drama he has endeavoured to establish points of contact and connecting links between play and play,

thus strengthening our sense of the unity of Elizabethan drama as the product of a group of craftsmen differing much in talent, but all collaborating—in spite of the real or factitious quarrels in which many of them engaged—each according to his powers in a common creative effort. He has projected many daring views and seeming paradoxes—he tells us himself that he does not expect to carry his readers with him all the way—but it is fair to add that he has everywhere supported his opinions with an imposing array of evidence.

The chapters in which Mr. Allen calls attention to anticipations of *Midsummer-Night's Dream* in *Titus Andronicus* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, and of *Macbeth* in *Arden of Feversham*, are noteworthy, as the argument is here based largely upon technical considerations that are within the special competence of the dramatic critic. We follow Mr. Allen with interest, therefore, as he traces the balanced pattern of some well-known play in the rudimentary forms of the earlier drama, or shows that the apparently trivial means by which the required atmosphere is obtained in *Arden of Feversham*, were later to be refined and used with heightened effect in *Macbeth*, or that amid the crude horrors of *Titus Andronicus*, there are adumbrations of some of the motives of tragic pity in *King Lear*.

Mr. Allen has stressed some points in the case against the Shakespearean authorship of *Pericles*, citing, for instance, Jonson's contemptuous reference to the way in which the play was apparently put together:—

“mouldy . . . Pericles . . . Scraps out of every dish.”

The phrase just quoted describes the play exactly from the point of view adopted by Mr. Allen, and it is difficult to see that it can have any other meaning than that *Pericles* is a hotchpotch of borrowed situations, characters, etc., a *pastiche* of quotation and paraphrase from better plays. The internal evidence points, I think, to this conclusion, though it is necessary to premise that the argument based on this evidence requires a readjustment of the generally accepted chronology of the plays, and that it must be rejected if we are to continue to place *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*, after *Pericles* and with that composition in a final group of romantic plays, completing and rounding off Shakespeare's career as a dramatist. As an alternative to the view advocated by Mr. Allen we must believe that Shakespeare revised certain scenes in *Pericles*, and that in these he wrote below himself, introducing with seeming difficulty, or clumsily, images that elsewhere he had employed or was afterwards to employ with that felicity of style which was his peculiar gift. The reader who wishes to pursue the subject further, will find a statement of the case for the Shakespearean authorship of those scenes in *Pericles*, in which Marina appears, in a scholarly work by Lektor V. Osterberg, *Grevinden af Salisbury og Marina af William Shakespeare* (Copenhagen, 1926). In supporting his case, Mr. Osterberg appeals to parts of the evidence cited by Mr. Allen in his study of the play.

In the chapter on *Sejanus* the author examines the political implications of the play, and draws an

interesting parallel between it and *Julius Cæsar*, which he connects, perhaps rightly, with the Essex rebellion, either as propaganda for the rebellion or as a subsequent apology for its chief authors. It is not improbable that the authorities regarded *Julius Cæsar* as tendencious, to say the least, and that consequently Shakespeare may have been for some time, as Mr. Allen surmises, under a cloud. Mr. Allen makes the plausible suggestion that the historian Cordus, in Jonson's play, was intended to represent Shakespeare, and that the eloquent speech in which Cordus pleads the innocence of the motives that led him to eulogize Brutus and Cassius, would be read by contemporaries as an apology for the author of *Julius Cæsar*. If we admit this interpretation of the speech, we must recognize the generosity of Jonson's attitude, which would seem to have been that of a man who respected the character and genius of the author of *Julius Cæsar*, while reprobating the doctrines which the malicious might find a pretext for reading into his play. Mr. Allen has succeeded, I think, in demonstrating that not only did Jonson write *Sejanus* in emulation of *Julius Cæsar*, as the latest editors of Jonson say, but that the view of the same editors that Jonson owed more to Shakespeare than he was perhaps aware of, is rather an understatement. Jonson would seem, from the evidence produced by Mr. Allen, to have followed closely in Shakespeare's wake, writing with an eye fixed on Shakespeare's conduct of his scenes, and re-handling constantly the rich material which these scenes supplied.

Mr. Allen shows conclusively, I think, that passages in *Twelfth Night* are echoed or parodied in Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*, and that, consequently, *Twelfth Night* cannot have been written later than 1599, the year in which Jonson's play was produced. With some hesitation Mr. Allen identifies the imaginary spectator Cordatus with Shakespeare, but perhaps a better case might be made out for according this honour to Cordatus' companion, Mitis, whose name may have been suggested by the epithet "gentle" applied by contemporaries to Shakespeare. It is remarkable at any rate that it is Mitis who proposes as a suitable subject for a play a romantic theme that recalls instantly the plot of *Twelfth Night*; and it was perhaps with a touch of ironic humour that he is made to insist on the necessity of a strict observance of the unities. Mr. Allen contends that *Every Man Out of His Humour*, and *The Silent Woman*, are recastings of the plot of *Twelfth Night* in Jonson's realistic manner, and that it was Jonson's deliberate purpose, in both these plays, to satirize the romantic outlook on life that had charmed playgoers in *Twelfth Night*, as well as to show all concerned how life should be presented on the stage. The reader must judge for himself whether Mr. Allen has proved his point, or whether the apparent satire is not to be explained as due to the fundamental opposition between Jonson's way of looking at life and that of Shakespeare. Mr. Allen's suggestion that Jonson's satire was directed against Shakespeare's methods as a dramatist is not, however, incompatible with

Jonson's avowed admiration for the genius of his friend. He jests, in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, at Shakespeare's application for a coat-of-arms, but Jonson was not the man to spare either the foibles or the errors of a friend, or to conceal his arrogant belief in his own capacity to show the better way.

The dramatic masterpieces of the Elizabethan and Stuart periods have been studied for the most part as the products of individual genius, and rarely in relation to that rich external life from which they drew their inspiration, and which they reflect. They cannot but have reacted, at countless points, to that life, so coloured and full of adventure. They reveal superficial obscurities, and conceal beneath the surface undercurrents of meaning—constituting in some instances, in Mr. Allen's opinion, a play within the play—intelligible once to the initiated, but now only to be resolved, if at all, by an intensive study of each play in relation to the literature and social history of the period. This comparative method of study has been followed by the author of the present book with a zest that carries the reader breathlessly along, and infects him with something of the author's enthusiasm. If the author is bold in speculation, we owe him gratitude. His shafts will sometimes fly wide, but now and again he may bring down a quarry which has evaded the pursuit of more cautious marksmen. And now, the game's afoot!

PRELIMINARY

DISCOVERY of origins possesses, for some minds, a peculiar fascination and delight. Men, and subjects, become more comprehensible, and therefore more interesting, when we know the earliest circumstances, and processes, that went to their shaping and development. My own lively interest in the origins of certain Shakespearean and other Elizabethan plays was first awakened by the performances of that now extinct producing society, "The Phoenix," formed in 1919, for the purpose of reviving Elizabethan and Restoration dramas, which would not otherwise be seen upon the stage; and it was further stimulated by the tercentenary performances at the Old Vic., during the season 1923-24, with Mr. Robert Atkins as producer, when several Shakespearean or pseudo-Shakespearean plays, such as *Titus Andronicus*, and *Timon of Athens*, were put on, partly as a matter of public interest, but also with the intention to complete, under Miss Lilian Baylis's management, the presentation, at the Waterloo-Road house, of all the Shakespearean plays included in the First Folio. Watching *Pericles*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*, it was borne in upon me that there loomed through these, and other such immature plays, curious adumbrations, and fascinating problems of authorship, that had not yet been sufficiently investigated or determined. The witnessing of a drama upon the stage suggests

comparisons, and drives analogies home with a conviction that the printed text alone cannot easily supply. These performances lured me to a brief study of Elizabethan borrowings.

All men, whether writers or no, must borrow; since the whole of this world's progress, by infinitely slow degrees, out of chaos and old night, has been accomplished by a process of age-long, multitudinous, accumulated loans and adaptations from our progenitors, which we, as inheritors of a sacred trust, must make use of, and adapt to the service of our own generation, before handing it down, in a more shapely form, to a posterity that will do likewise. The borrower will be vindicated or convicted by the use that he makes of the loan.

Never, I suppose, in the history of literature, has borrowing been so much practised as among the dramatists of the Elizabethan age. Proprietary right in material possessions they seem to have understood and accepted, but copyright in words and ideas, though partially recognized in theory at least, was undefined, and unprotected, or insufficiently protected, by law. Plots of plays, especially, seem to have been, in practice, almost common property, a fact partly accounted for by the practice of joint authorship, playwright after playwright—Shakespeare among them during his early days—being employed, in collaboration with other hacks, to furbish up outworn dramatic material. There seems to have existed also, during the last two decades of Elizabeth, a certain freemasonry of theatrical dialogue, which may explain, in part, some, though not all, of the innumerable cases of minor plagiarism, so frequently pointed out by

commentators. Of this "license of ink" the Elizabethan dramatists, in general, made the freest and fullest possible use. Lazy, or unskilled in the weaving of plots—and compelled often to work in haste¹—they would turn readily to the common fund, and borrow freely therefrom such stuff as might best serve the moment's need. What generally they most enjoyed, I think, was the shaping of character and dialogue, and the writing of the poetry; though even in those respects they shared, often, so strange a community of style that, after the lapse of centuries, it has become almost impossible to determine accurately the individual share of any particular writer, although certain mannerisms, characteristic opinions, or tricks of expression may prove, here and there, the predominance of one mind, as Mr. Dugdale Sykes, in *Sidelights on Shakespeare*, has so cleverly shewn. Thus, for example, the intensely national and anti-foreign spirit of the two concluding lines of the second part of *The Troublesome Reign of King John*:

If England's peers and people join in one,
Not Pope, nor France, nor Spain can do them wrong

—lines that Shakespeare was to transmute into the better-known couplet:

Nought shall make us rue,
If England to herself do rest but true—

point, almost conclusively, to the hand of Peele, just as the irrelevant legal technicalities in *Arden of Feversham* suggest the mind and hand of the aforetime scrivener, Kyd.

¹London was then a small town—about the size of Salisbury; and the limited number of playgoers compelled a frequent change of bill.

This strange dearth of originality, in contriving plots for plays, the demi-commonwealth of ideas, and even of language and idiom, the juvenile habit of imitation, everywhere so apparent among these adult children of genius, whom we call the Elizabethans—after all, a very natural, and, indeed inevitable phase, in the development of a school of dramatists who had come into being with such swift precocity of growth—is in no instance more observable than in Shakespeare; but I think that in the dazzle of his genius one may easily overlook his inveterate laziness, in seeking new plots, and his readiness to find them in sources which, though seemingly uninspiring, proved to be congenial because they were familiar to him, and close at hand. Quite often, and in other realms also than literature, the most obvious explanation, because it is near and simple, may be, for those very reasons, overlooked.

What, in all probability, was Shakespeare's course of action, when, as must have happened many times, his collaborators at Burbage's theatre in Shoreditch, or, after the turn of the century, at the new Globe Theatre, on Bankside, came to him with some such words as these: "So-and-So at the Curtain, or Henslowe and Alleyn at the Rose are doing too good business with their new tragedy of Peele's (or whoever it might be). Can't you contrive to write us something that will cut them out?" Did he proceed to lock himself up in the study of his house on Bankside, or in Blackfriars, or wherever he was then living, and there await, the coming to him, out of the void, of some daemonic inspiration, from the frenzy of which a masterpiece would emerge? No! for such, surely, was not the Eliza-

bethan way. "Ex nihilo nihil fit"; and Shakespeare himself, I think, has pronounced finally against the fallacy of creation from the void in Lear's stern admonition to Cordelia; "Nothing will come of nothing—speak again." I would rather suppose that, when Shakespeare wanted a new play, his habit, as a practical, working dramatist, would be, to go to the library of his patron, Southampton, and there look up some subject that the town was interested in at the moment; or, more probably, to turn over in his mind some of the likely and congenial subjects which, at one time or another, he had noted, among plays that he had read, seen, acted in, collaborated in, overhauled, or written; and, thereupon, to seek the manuscript room—if there was one—at the Globe, or whatever other theatre he might then be working for, and there rummage about, until he found some old play, suited to his purpose, out of which he could fashion something enormously superior to itself.

Steevens once wrote: "A time may arrive in which it will become evident, from books and manuscripts as yet undiscovered and unexamined, that Shakespeare did not attempt a single play on any subject till the effect of the same story, or at least the ruling incidents in it, had been tried on the stage and familiarized to the audience."¹

To that opinion I subscribe; and this little book goes, I hope, a small way towards confirming Steevens' prediction.

¹Mr. J. M. Robertson, in *Shakespeare and Chapman*, pp. 279–80, comments thus upon Steevens' remarks: "It is unwarrantable to suggest that Shakespeare's company never produced an entirely new piece. But if we put the modified proposition that Shakespeare rarely produced a play without seeing either a previous version or a draft by another playwright, I think we shall be very near the truth."

CHAPTER I

"TITUS ANDRONICUS" AND

"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM"

That Shakespeare drew the main plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from *Titus Andronicus*; and the clown episodes of *The Dream*, in part, from *Love's Labour's Lost*. That Titus also adumbrates *King Lear*, and reveals Shakespeare's interest in the old *King Lear* story.

"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM" was first printed, so far as we know, in 1600; but was written several years earlier, somewhere about 1594.¹ The direct origin of the comedy has not, hitherto, been definitely ascertained; but a reference to that carefully written volume, *The Sources and Analogues of A Midsummer Night's Dream*, compiled by Mr. Frank Sidgwick, and forming one of "The Shakespeare Classic" Series, edited by Professor Sir Israel Gollancz, tells us that, for the play's triple plot—fairy, sentimental, and grotesque—Shakespeare drew upon literature that he had been lately reading, including, among

¹ Just about the time that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was probably written, the play *Orlando Furioso*, by Greene, after having been entered to John Danter, on December 7, 1593, is transferred to Cuthbert Burbage on May 28, 1594, as recorded in the introductory note to *Orlando Furioso*, in the Mermaid edition of Robert Greene. This play not only contains a reference to Theseus and Hippolyta, in II, 1, but also, in the same scene, a passage by the Shepherd, which seems to hint at Puck.

So I transformed to this country shape,
Haunting these groves do work my master's will,
To plague the Palatine with jealousy.

For the relation between *Orlando Furioso* and Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, see Chapter III.

other works, Chaucer, North's Plutarch, and Golding's Ovid ; while his fairy lore, in general, was derived "from no literary source at all, but from the popular beliefs which must have been current in oral tradition in his youth."¹

That, so far as it goes, is, no doubt, a quite accurate statement of the case. Shakespeare, in writing his play, did, almost certainly, make use of all those sources of information ; yet, at the same time, I feel confident that Mr. Sidgwick's list omits mention of the real and direct source of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which Shakespeare, in my judgment, drew neither from Chaucer, nor from any other ancient author, classical or romantic, but from a contemporary play, with which he was thoroughly familiar, and which—though probably not its original author—he, almost certainly, collaborated in, or overhauled. The play I refer to is *Titus Andronicus*.

That *Titus Andronicus*, though included in the First Folio of 1623, between *Romeo and Juliet* and *Coriolanus*, is not mainly, if at all, Shakespeare's work, will to-day, I think, be generally conceded. Mr. Dugdale Sykes, at the close of his admirable study of *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, which, as he shows, almost beyond dispute, was written mainly by Peele²—uses these words :

¹ Mr Acheson thinks that *The Dream* was first produced for the marriage of Sir Thomas Heneage to Lady Southampton, mother of Shakespeare's Southampton, in 1594.

² *Sidelights on Shakespeare*. Mr. Arthur Acheson, in *Shakespeare's Sonnet Story* (p. 96) has pointed out that *Titus Andronicus* contains 81 classical allusions and eleven Latin quotations, in both of which Peele indulged freely, whereas *Richard II*, composed shortly before *Titus Andronicus*, contains only three classical allusions. *Titus Andronicus*, moreover, contains many striking parallels with Peele's *Honour of the Garter*.

“ A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM ” 3

“With regard to the last-named play (*Titus Andronicus*) it may at least be submitted that in view of the complete recasting to which, in his play *King John*, Shakespeare has subjected Peele’s material, the belief that he was, in any real sense, the author of *Titus*—almost every page of which reveals traces of Peele’s vocabulary and phrasing—is no longer tenable.” Lacking, as I do, Mr. Sykes’s intimate and specialized knowledge of individual Elizabethan vocabulary and phrasing, I venture, nevertheless, to agree with Mr. Sykes, concerning the non-Shakespearean authorship of *Titus*, for the additional reason that, if Shakespeare as I shall endeavour to prove, drew the whole substance of his fantastic comedy from one of the most lurid tragedies ever written for any stage—that fact alone, by implying discontent with, or disapproval of the basic treatment of the original, seems to weigh against the probability of Shakespearean authorship of *Titus*.¹ My theory rather is, that, in writing *The Dream*, he dealt far more drastically with another of Peele’s plays than he had done even in the case of *King John*.²

¹Shakespeare, of course, often made use again of ideas taken from his own earlier plays; but I cannot imagine him transmuting into a fanciful comedy any theme that he has once treated, though immaturely, with deep seriousness—whether that theme were *Titus*, *Hamlet*, or *Macbeth*. See later my remarks on *Titus* and *Lear*.

²Peele’s play was probably based upon one of the earlier versions of *Titus*. There was a piece, *Titus and Vespasian*, recorded by Henslowe, as being played for the first time on April 11, 1591, and also a *Titus Andronicus*, marked as a new production by Henslowe on January 23, 1593, which may be the Folio play recast from the earlier one. The version of *Titus* acted by the English players in Germany, about 1600, was probably based on *Titus and Vespasian*, the latter character being introduced, though confusedly. There are close resemblances, in plot and dialogue, to the Folio play. Ben Jonson’s well-known reference to *Titus*, throwing the play back “these 25 or 30 years,” from the date of *Bartholomew Fair*, 1614, fixes the first production as taking place between 1584 and 1589.

4 "TITUS ANDRONICUS" AND

The first occasion upon which this play of *Titus Andronicus* came vividly to my mind, was when I attended its revival, by Miss Lilian Baylis, with Mr. Robert Atkins as producer, at the Old Vic., during, I think, the autumn of 1923. As an acting drama, the tragedy, though terrible at times, almost beyond endurance, proved to be surprisingly strong; and the actors, I am told, were wont to be depressed by a sense of comparative failure, after any performance during which the fainting casualties dropped to less than half-a-dozen; but what so intensely aroused, and held, my interest during that memorable first night, was less the skill of the clever company interpreting it, less the high dramatic merit of the play—bloodthirsty though it be—than the alluring suggestions and memories that the performance, almost from the beginning, evoked. Continuously, from the second act onwards, there was present to my consciousness a sense of agreeable, yet, somehow, distorted familiarity for which I could not, at first, account.

Vividly the scenes presented themselves, in that sombre capital of the classical world, and in the forest outside the city. No conventionally nor lyrically romantic Arden, this, that the dramatist shows us; but a nightmare wood, "Ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull," fit setting for the bloody and licentious intrigues that are to be carried on in it. In Tamora's phrase (II, 3):

A barren detested vale, you see it is;
The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,
O'ercome with moss and baleful mistletoe.
Here never shines the sun; here nothing breeds,
Unless the nightly owl or fatal raven.

“ A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM ” 5

Only occasionally has the gloom been lifted awhile, as with the entry of Titus, and his companions, in the preceding scene (II, 2):

Tit. The hunt is up, the morn is bright and grey,
The fields are fragrant and the woods are green.
Uncouple here, and let us make a bay,
And wake the emperor and his lovely bride,
And rouse the prince and ring a hunter’s peal.
I have been troubled in my sleep this night,
But dawning day new comfort hath inspired.

A cry of hounds is heard, and of horns “winded in a peal.” Saturninus and Tamora, Bassianus and Lavinia enter with their attendants; and there passes between the men a typical Elizabethan jest, concerning the too early wakening of young lovers, followed by Saturninus’ offer to Tamora ;

Madam, now shall ye see

Our Roman hunting.

Marc. I have dogs, my lord,

Will rouse the proudest panther in the chase,
And climb the highest promontory top.

Tit. And I have horse will follow where the game
Makes way, and runs like swallows o’er the plain.

Reading these lines, there came to me again, just as there had at the Old Vic., a strange sense of distorted, yet long and delightful familiarity with these scenes—a familiarity, however, that I was now no longer at a loss to understand. I knew well, had long known, in another Shakespearean play, a wood near a classical capital, in which an intrigue, not terrible, indeed, yet quaintly mischievous, is woven about two pairs of lovers, who also are awakened by the music of horn and hound; and

6 "TITUS ANDRONICUS" AND

who are wedded, at the end of the play, though not, as here, at its beginning.¹

The Dream began to present itself to me as a turning "to favour and to prettiness"² of the things in *Titus Andronicus* "that would never please." Rome, with its Colosseum, and long tradition of nameless barbarities enacted therein, became Athens, with its Parthenon, and all the serene and lovely associations of Hellenic art. The barren, detested vales become fairy-haunted forest glades; the deadly intrigue, a round of mischievous pranks; and the nightmare horror of the earlier play—"When will this fearful slumber have an end?" (*Titus*, III, 1)—is transmuted into nothing worse than, for the lovers, "the fierce vexation of a dream," and, for the principal clown "a most rare vision, a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was." This scene links itself also, in one's mind, with Titus' line (*Titus*, III, 1):

Is not my sorrow deep, having no bottom,

which may conceivably be the origin of the weaver's name, and of the inconsequent title "It shall be called Bottom's dream, because it hath no bottom."³

Similarly, upon those who people the wood, corresponding changes are wrought. The two couples of the earlier play—Saturninus and

¹This kind of story generally goes with an Elizabethan forest scene; but there is, I think, more than coincidence here.

²Compare Titus's line in Act V of the old version of *Titus Andronicus*, played in Germany by the English players: "Oh accursed be the hunt and the day it was held. I hoped it would end in joy." See Cohn's *Shakespeare in Germany*, p. 198.

³For Shakespeare's indebtedness to his own *Love's Labour's Lost*, when writing *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, see pp. 9-13.

" A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM " 7

Tamora, Bassianus and Lavinia—become Lysander and Hermia, Demetrius and Helena. Puck's elfin mischiefs supplant Aaron's deadly malice; and Oberon's magic spells stand for the bloody contrivings of Titus's foes. For Tamora, vengeful Queen of the Goths, we are given Titania, and Hippolyta, the Amazon warrior—both of them also queens. Once in possession of the clue, other simple analogies follow, almost at a glance. It will be remembered that Tamora, in *Titus Andronicus*, gives birth to a child, fathered by Aaron, and described, by the nurse (*Titus*, IV, 2):

A joyless, dismal, black, and sorrowful issue
a being

as loathsome as a toad
Amongst the fairest breeders of our clime.

That ill-gotten babe, by a process of transmutation precisely similar to the others already noted, becomes the subject of discord between Oberon and his queen:

A lovely boy stolen from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling.

Further, Tamora's line (II, 3)—

The snake lies rolled in the cheerful sun—
read in conjunction with her later speech, in the same scene, containing the lines

A thousand fiends, a thousand hissing snakes,
Ten thousand swelling toads, as many urchins,

gives us, apparently, the origin of the lullaby song; "You spotted snakes," with which the fairies sing their queen to sleep; though—as the Master

8 "TITUS ANDRONICUS" AND

of Jesus College, Cambridge,¹ has kindly reminded me—an even earlier expression of the same thought is to be found in *Venus and Adonis*:

Here come and sit where never serpent hisses.

Lastly, as a determining proof, that Shakespeare wrote *The Dream* with the script of *Titus Andronicus* before him, or closely present to his mind—the latter play provides a clue to the origin of two of the several entertainments offered by Athenian citizens for Theseus's acceptance,² "on his wedding day at night"—the first of these being in Martius's speech (*Titus*, II, 3):

So pale did shine the moon on Pyramus,
When he by night lay bathed in maiden's blood—

and the second in the scene following, spoken by Marcus:

As Cerberus at the Thracian poet's feet—

that Thracian poet (Orpheus) being the hero referred to in "the old device," as Theseus calls it, entitled:

The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage—

an entertainment now permanently lost to us, in

¹In his suggestive little book, *A Chapter in the Early Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 112–114, the Master of Jesus has also pointed out the connection between the hunting scenes in *Titus Andronicus* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I did not, however, see the book until after this chapter was drafted.

²The "satire keen and critical"

"The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of Learning, late deceased in beggary"
probably refers to the death of Spenser (Jan. 16, 1599), and therefore would have been added during a revision of the play.

“ A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM ” 9

favour of “the tedious brief scene of young Pyramus.”¹

Titus Andronicus, however, though, almost certainly, “its parent and original,” is not, in my judgment, the only play upon which Shakespeare drew for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. He turned back also, I think, to that early, perhaps first, comedy of his, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, which—regarding it, no doubt, as immature work—he seems often to have made a quarrying ground, since that delightful comedy teems with adumbrations and suggestions of later plays, including *Much Ado*,² *As You Like It*,³ and *Twelfth Night*.⁴ The first hint of *The Dream*, that I find in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* comes with Biron’s words, “under the left pap,”⁵ in the third scene of the fourth act; and, from about that point, all the business of the king and lords overhearing one another, and such passages as

King. Sweet leaves, shade folly. Who is he comes here?
(*Steps aside.*)

¹*The Dream* was, in turn, borrowed from, notably by Fletcher and Massinger in *Two Noble Kinsmen*, the opening chorus of that play, and the girlish friendship between Emilia and Flavina, being certainly inspired by Shakespeare. In the same play there are hints of Bottom, and the other clowns. The last 500 lines of Book IV of *Paradise Lost*, including Adam and Eve’s “Blissful Bower” contain many borrowings from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. See chapter 10.

²Biron and Rosaline become Benedick and Beatrice.

³Armado and Jacquenetta become Touchstone and Audrey.

⁴The scene between Boyet and the Princess, at the beginning of Act II, with such lines as:

Before we enter his forbidden gates,
To know his pleasure

recalls, in atmosphere and quality, the Olivia-Orsino episodes at the opening of *Twelfth Night*, though those scenes, in my judgment, derive still more directly from the Silvius-Phoebe scenes in *As You Like It*. See *post*, pp. 35-42

⁵“Ay that left pap, where heart doth hop.”—(*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, V, 1.)

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What, Longaville! and reading! listen; ear.

Biron. Now, in thy likeness, one more fool appear!

are quite in the vein of the two pairs of Athenian lovers—"four woodcocks in a dish (*Love's Labour's Lost* IV, 3)"—and the mischiefs practised upon them by Puck. The same theme is sustained by other lines, such as

Biron. O, what a scene of foolery have I seen!

comparable with:

Lord, what fools these mortals be;

and the same lord's:

That you three fools lacked me fool to make up the mess—

followed, a few lines later, by "True, true, we are four," which, in *The Dream*, reads: "Two of both kinds make up four." This passage in the same scene:

Dum. I never knew man hold vile stuff so dear.

Long. Look, here's thy love.

is not very far from:

Titan. Methought I was enamoured of an ass.

Ober. There lies your love.

Further, passing on to Act V, the decision of Holofernes and his companions, to present *The Nine Worthies*; and the pedant's expressed determination, to "play three myself," probably father Bottom, and his "Let me play the lion too." Rosaline's speech—

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They are worse fools to purchase mocking so:
That same Biron I'll torture e'er I go.
O that I knew he were but in by the week!
How I would make him fawn, and beg, and seek.—

is also in the Puck-Oberon vein.

Interesting also is the following, by Boyet (V, 2), in which you get, not only another version of Puck's "Cupid is a knavish lad," but another description, almost, of the rehearsal in the wood.

Boyet. I stole into a neighbour thicket by
And overheard what you shall overhear;
That, by and by, disguised they will be here.
Their herald is a pretty knavish page,
That well by heart hath conn'd his embassy;
Action and accent did they teach him there;
"Thus must thou speak," and "thus thy body bear."
And ever and anon they made a doubt
Presence majestical would put him out;
For, quoth the king, "an angel shall thou see;
Yet fear not thou, but speak audaciously."

A few lines lower down, in the same speech, this couplet—

One rubbed his elbow thus, and fleer'd, and swore
A better speech was never spoke before—

has sense and rhythm strongly reminiscent of Puck's

And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,
And waxen in their mirth, and sneeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.

Many other phrases bear the same implication, such as

Boy. We will do't, come what will come.

King. Yet still she is the moon, and I the man.

And this:

Ros. Their shallow shows and prologues vilely penned
And their rough carriage so ridiculous,
Should be presented at our tent to us.

The same lady's phrase (V, 2):

In that hour, my lord,
They did not bless us with one happy word

perhaps suggested Philostrate's,
There is not one word apt, one player fitted;
while this, spoken by the Princess,

That sport best pleases that dost least know how:
Where zeal strives to content, and the contents
Dies in the zeal of that which it presents

is probably Shakespeare's original of Theseus's:

For never anything can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it—

and, if my surmise be correct, affords an interesting example of how Shakespeare could improve upon himself. It is, perhaps, also worth noting, that Holofernes' determination, in the character of Judas, "not to be put out of countenance," as Sir Nathaniel had allowed himself to be, when standing for Alexander, is matched by the same quality of stubborn self-sufficiency in Bottom: and it looks as though Demetrius got his

One lion may, when many asses do

from this couplet ;

Bir. An thou wert a lion, we would do so.
Boy. Therefore, as he is an ass, let him go.

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Finally, there is a pretty consonance, or contrast, between the two plays, in these lines of Biron:

Our wooing doth not end like an old play;
Jack hath not Jill: these ladies courtesy
Might well have made our sport a comedy.—

and these, by Puck:

Jack shall have Jill,
Nought shall go ill;

The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

Shakespeare, then, it seems, wrote *The Dream* primarily from *Titus Andronicus*, and secondarily from *Love's Labour's Lost*. To Aaron, possibly, we owe Othello and Iago; to *Andronicus*, almost certainly, the fundamentals of *Lear*¹; when, in 1607, he returned to *Titus*, and characteristically lifted its gruesome theme from one of sordid horror into the loftier realm of spiritual tragedy.

Andronicus opens somewhat in this way. Titus, the victorious old Roman general, headstrong and violent, has four sons, Lucius, Quintus, Martius, and Mutius, themselves also, in their various ways and degrees, as wilful and passionate, almost, as their father. Titus' daughter, Lavinia, is betrothed to Saturninus, son of the late Emperor of Rome; but Bassianus, Saturninus' brother, claims the lady, and, supported by Titus' sons, would abduct her by force. The father, furiously indignant, slays one of them, and denounces all—(*Titus*, I, 1)

No, foolish tribune, no; no son of mine,
Nor thou, nor these, confederates in the deed
That hath dishonoured all our family;
Unworthy brother and unworthy sons.

¹Professor Churton Collins held that Titus adumbrated *Lear*, and saw in Aaron a forerunner of Iago; a fact of which I was unaware when my study of *Titus* led me to the same opinion.

Upon that theme Shakespeare, as I think, builds up his new play; and *Titus* develops into *Lear*, though the now mature dramatist is careful to avoid the technical fault committed by the earlier author, in alienating sympathy from his hero, by making him slay his own son in the first act.¹ He gives to *Lear*, indeed, no sons, headstrong or otherwise, but, instead, three daughters, two of them wicked and violent, the third of good and gentle, yet determined, character—Goneril and Regan, it seems, descending directly from the turbulent youths; and Cordelia from Lavinia. The dramatist then merges the story into another, also, in common with that of *Titus*, well known, and much current in England, at that time—the ancient legend of *Lear*, originally, I think—just as *Hamlet* was—a nature-myth, and forming the subject of the early *Lear* play, the bulk of which, probably, had been written by Peele, the dramatist who, as Mr. Dugdale Sykes has shown, was also the principal author of *Titus Andronicus*.²

Many, and striking, are the parallels between *Titus* and *King Lear*. In the "dreadful" forest, the author of the first-mentioned play has set a lonely valley, thus vividly described by Tamora (*Titus*, II, 3) in a passage already quoted.

A barren detested vale, you see it is:

¹*Lear*, however, disinherits his daughter.

²See ante p. 2, and also Mr. Syke's study of *King Leir*, in *Sidelights on Shakespeare*. Assuming that Mr. Sykes, as I think, is right in assigning to Peele the principal authorship of *Leir*, *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, and *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare's indebtedness to him in *King Lear*, *King John*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* becomes very remarkable. Of no other contemporary dramatist did he make such free use; Kyd, it seems, coming second, as a quarrying ground for tragedy.

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I am inclined to think that, without pushing conjecture too far, we can see here the origin of the desolate heath, whereon the demented old king is to endure, and invoke, the storm. In *Titus*, however, as was natural, the argument does not rise so high, is not yet lifted from the stones to the tempest. Kneeling, the old man appeals tearfully to the judges, on behalf of his condemned sons.

Tit. For these, tribunes, in the dust I write
My heart’s deep languor, and my soul’s sad tears:
Let my tears stanch the earth’s dry appetite;
My sons’ sweet blood will make it shame and blush.

The banished Lucius then enters, with his sword drawn, and tells his father, that he pleads in vain.

My gracious lord, no tribune hears you speak.

To which Titus answers:

Why, ’tis no matter, man: if they did hear,
They would not mark me; or if they did mark,
They would not pity me; yet plead I must
And bootless unto them
Therefore I tell my sorrows to the stones;
Who, though they cannot answer my distress,
Yet in some sort they are better than the tribunes,
For that they would not intercept my tale.
When I do weep, they humbly at my feet
Receive my tears, and seem to weep with me;
And, were they but attired in grave weeds,
Rome could afford no tribune like to these.
A stone is soft as wax, tribunes more hard than stones;
A stone is silent and offendeth not,
And tribunes with their tongues doom men to death.

Compare this passage with the famous one in *Lear* (III, 2); and curious parallels and antitheses,

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at once come to mind. Here are the lines from *Lear* :

Fool. Here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire, spout, rain.

Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters.

I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;

I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,

You owe me no subscription: then let fall

Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,

A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man.

But yet I call you servile ministers,

That have with two pernicious daughters join'd

Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head

So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

In both these speeches, human kind, and some part of the physical world, are compared, to the advantage of the latter. Titus pleads bootless to the tribunes; yet, in his doting fancy, not altogether vainly, to the stones, which, though dumb to the old man's distress, do, at least, receive his tears, and seem to weep with him. Their silence, moreover, unlike that of the tribunes, is natural, and void of offence. Similarly, in *Lear*'s speech—though it be lifted, in Shakespeare's kingliest and most characteristic fashion, to suit the loftier theme, from the stones, up to the storm and the stars—the main ideas remain almost identical, the pitiless forces of physical nature being contrasted, this time, not with stony-hearted tribunes, but with "pernicious daughters"; and again to the advantage of inanimate powers; since fire and storm owe nothing to a king who has bestowed no kingdom, nor ever called them children.

Other analogies, between *Titus* and *Lear*, are

but slightly less significant. Throughout Peele's nightmare tragedy, with its appalling situations, and its one tremendous line—

When will this fearful slumber have an end?

—there may be noted several passages, pointing towards connection of thought in the two plays. In the third act of *Titus* (III, 2), for instance, his brother, Marcus, the tribune, kills a fly; whereupon Titus, already on the verge of insanity—he has just said: "Why, Marcus, no one should be mad but I"—expostulates vehemently:

Tit. Out on thee, murderer!

Mar. Alas, my Lord, I have but killed a fly!

Tit. But how if that fly had a father and a mother?

How would he hang his slender gilded wings

And buzz lamenting doings in the air,

Poor harmless fly!

That passage, in quality of conception and expression, is, in my judgment, pure *Lear*; and its thought finds an echo in Gloucester's bitterly fatalistic speech, spoken on the heath (*Lear*, IV, 1):

As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods;

They kill us for their sport.—

Let me conclude, so far as these two plays are concerned, by quoting a significant couplet from *Titus* (III, 2), spoken by the old man to Lavinia :

I'll to thy closet and go read with thee

Sad stories chanced in the times of old.

which, surely, is the origin of those exquisitely serene and gentle lines,

Come let's away to prison;
We two alone will sing like birds in the cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies.

We have seen, in this chapter, something of the use to which Shakespeare seems to have put certain old plays, *Titus Andronicus* in particular, the bulk of which, in all probability, were written by Peele. In the following chapter, I shall endeavour to show that another early Elizabethan dramatist, upon whom Shakespeare also liked to draw, was Peele's contemporary, Kyd.

CHAPTER II

"ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM" AND "MACBETH"

That Shakespeare drew from *Arden of Feversham* certain ideas for *Henry IV*, and many ideas and lines which he afterwards used and developed in *Macbeth*.

Macbeth, based historically upon Hollingshed's Chronicle, is also another version of *Arden of Feversham*, lifted from the sphere of domestic to that of royal tragedy.

LEAVING *King Lear*, let us pass on to 1605,¹ or thereabouts, when Shakespeare began to write *Macbeth*. Whence came the subject of that play? The answer is, from Hollingshed; and, beyond question, he did make free use of that chronicler, in constructing his tragedy; though it seems to me probable that the man to whom Shakespeare may have owed his first ideas for *Macbeth*, was not Hollingshed, but the dramatist, Kyd, from whose lost *Hamlet* play—as seems likely, though it is not definitely provable—the man of Stratford had already drawn—and freely, too—when the great *Hamlet* saga, as material for a tragedy of revenge, had first come swimming into his ken.

Exactly when Kyd, or some other, wrote that early *Hamlet* play, we do not know; but we do know that, somewhere about 1588, there came,

¹*Lear* is generally dated 1605; *Macbeth* rather later.

principally from Kyd's pen,¹ another powerful tragedy, not of revenge, this time, but of passion—the first domestic drama that has come down to us, in the English language, and, undoubtedly, one of the strongest, and most remarkable, acting plays written by any of Shakespeare's predecessors. It is a story based upon a notorious contemporary murder, the record of which came to Kyd through Hollingshed, who tells how Mistress Arden, wife of Thomas Arden, of Feversham in Kent, having conceived a passion for one Mosbie, plotted with him, and others, the murder of her husband, which, at last, they duly accomplished. The crime, however, was immediately discovered, and all the guilty persons—together, it seems, with a servant who, probably, was not guilty—were publicly executed, Alice Arden being burned alive, at Canterbury, in 1550.

Now Shakespeare, in my judgment, was accustomed to make free use of Kyd's plays, just as he was also of Peele's. The closeness to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* of the plot of *Fratricide Punished*—that quaint version of the same theme, done by the English players in Germany, in the early years of the seventeenth century—seems to show that Shakespeare, while flooding his version of the theme with his own characteristic idealism, beauty, poetry, philosophy, and range of human experience, borrowed his plot—just as he borrowed other plots

¹Mr. Dugdale Sykes's proof of Kyd's authorship of *Arden of Feversham*, in his *Sidelights on Shakespeare*, I accept, as conclusive. It seems probable that Shakespeare and Marlowe also had a hand in the play, and it may be that the three men, when members of Lord Pembroke's Company, gathered some of the material on the spot at Feversham.

—largely from that of Kyd, retaining, in all likelihood, some of Kyd's incidents, almost as he found them. It is interesting, too, in this connection, to observe that one of the best-known passages in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* recalls certain lines by Kyd, though the corresponding passage, in this instance, is not from Kyd's *Hamlet*, but from his *Arden of Feversham* (III, 5), where Mistress Alice, desperate with anxiety, lest Mosbie should carry out his threat to leave her, exclaims:

See, Mosbie, I will tear away the leaves,
And all the leaves, and in this golden cover
Shall thy sweet phrases and thy letters dwell;
And thereon will I chiefly meditate,
And hold no other seat but such devotion.

Hamlet. Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter.

Strange, to modern minds, yet natural enough to its own time, are these casual liftings from play to play; and, in this connection, it is worthy of notice, that Kyd's *Arden*, borrowed from by Shakespeare, for *Hamlet*, and still more, as we shall see, for *Henry IV* and *Macbeth*, contains, apparently, at least one borrowing, by Kyd from himself, when he puts into *Arden* lines from his own *Spanish Tragedy*, which he had written a few years before. In Act III, Scene 4, Lorenzo says:

I list not trust the air
 With utterance of our pretence therein,
 For fear the privy whispering of the wind
 Convey our words amongst unfriendly ears,
 That lie too open to advantages.

And in *Arden*, likewise, the guilty wife whispers to her lover, in almost identical phrases:

Conceal the rest, for 'tis too bad,
 Lest that my words be carried with the wind,
 And published in the world to both our shames.

Arden, then, is pervaded, unquestionably, by a direct Shakespearean quality and atmosphere, that moved me strongly, when I first read the play, and thrilled me, when I saw it acted at the Scala, in December, 1925, with Mr. William Poel as producer. The first adumbration to strike me, while watching that performance, was the appearance of Black Will and Shakebag, as forerunners of Pistol and his crew—an analogy that strengthens with the development of the play.¹ The words spoken by Black Will (II. 1), "One snatch, good corporal," recall Nym²; and Black Will's frequent outbursts of inflated and swaggering bombast:

I am the very man,
 Marked in my birth hour by the destinies
 To give an end to Arden's life on earth. (*Arden*, II, 2.)

his truculent, bullying manners with weaklings

¹If Shakespeare lifted ideas from *Arden of Feversham* into *Henry IV*, other dramatists also were accustomed to draw freely from each other, as Professor Cowl, editor of *Henry IV* in the "Arden" Shakespeare has shown in two articles in the *Times Lit. Sup.* for March 26, 1925, and Oct. 22, 1925. See also his *Some Echoes of Henry IV and An Experiment in Textual Criticism.* (Elkin Matthews and Marot.)

²So also do Will's words, a few lines lower down; "But let that pass."

who dare not stand up to him, as this to Greene (III, 4):

Speak, milksop slave, and never after speak

followed by a patronizing, yet high-flown mildness:

Your excuse hath somewhat mollified my choler is quite in the Pistol vein. But in the sixth scene of the third act occurs an even more striking forecast of Falstaff, and his company of rogues and cut-purses.

Will. I pray thee, Shakebag, let this answer thee,
That I have took more purses in this down
Than e'er thou handledst pistols in thy life.

Shake. Ay, haply thou hast picked more in a throng:
But should I brag what booties I have took
I think the overplus . . . would mount. . .

Here, within six lines of text, you have purse-cutting, pistols, and brag, all explicitly mentioned, while eight lines farther down, more bragging, and reference to the king's service, continue the chain of ideas that link the play with the Henrys.

Will. O Greene, intolerable!

It is not for mine honour to bear this.

Why, Shakebag, I did serve the king at Boulogne,
And thou canst brag of nothing that thou hast done.

In Act V, Scene 4, moreover, a reference to a robbery at Gadshill is introduced into a monologue by Will.

Besides that, I robbed him and his man once at Gadshill.¹

¹Gadshill, as late as 1590, was a resort of daring robbers. Steevens discovered, in the books of the Stationers Coy., an entry, dated 1558, of a ballad entitled *The Robbery at Gadshill*.

But by far more important and more interesting than the adumbrations of the Henrys, observable in *Arden of Feversham*, are those of a tragedy which, for sustained and exalted grandeur of diction, comes first in all dramatic literature—I mean *Macbeth*. That Shakespeare had *Arden of Feversham* before him when he wrote *Macbeth*, as certainly as that he had *Titus Andronicus* in mind when he wrote *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, is, to my thinking, beyond question; the scene from *Arden* of which he made most use, being Act II, Scene 2, from the second entrance of Greene, to the near end of Act III, Scene 2—passages vigorous and vivid enough intensely to excite Shakespeare's imagination, at a time when his genius was at its zenith, and his powers of expression were at their fullest maturity. While returning often to his original, for basic ideas, as was his custom in such cases, he has treated his material, nevertheless, with the utmost freedom—adapting, and transforming it, with such complete disregard of the sequences in *Arden* that he has, hitherto, baffled the commentators, who, side-tracked by Shakespeare's obvious indebtedness to Hollingshed, for the plot of *Macbeth*, have overlooked his use of the humble little tragedy, some three scenes of which had so impressed themselves upon his mind.¹ I can, perhaps, best attempt to prove my theory, by taking readers through these scenes in *Arden*, pointing out exactly how, and in what way, as I believe, Shakespeare made use of them, in writing *Macbeth*.

Let us begin with Act II, Scene 2, of *Arden of*

¹These are pages 79–87, in Dents' volume of the Everyman edition, "Minor Elizabethan Dramatists—pre-Shakespearean Tragedy."

Feversham, where the assassin Black Will's bombastic utterance, concerning himself and the destinies, already quoted in this book,¹ seems to foreshadow Macbeth, predestined, against his deeper will, to be the instrument of malignant fates—the lifting and aggrandizing of the theme, from one of mere sordid gain, to kingly ambition, being, as we have seen in the cases of *Titus* and *Lear*, typical of the ennobling processes of Shakespeare's mind, when he set about transforming an old play into a new one.

The two ruffians continue to talk together, in a strain of lofty poetry strangely at variance with their real character and purpose.²

Will is warming his imagination, and stirring his courage, with the prospect of the deed's coming reward.

Will. But wouldst thou charm me to effect this deed,
Tell me of gold, my resolution's fee;
Say thou seest Mosbie kneeling at my knees,
Offering me service for my high attempt,
And sweet Alice Arden, with a lap of crowns,
Comes with a lowly curtesy to the earth,
Saying, "Take this but for thy quarterage,
Such yearly tribute will I answer thee."
Why, this would steel soft-mettled cowardice,
With which Black Will was never tainted yet.
I tell thee, Greene, the forlorn traveller,
Whose lips are glued with summer's parching heat,

¹See ante, p. 22.

²Both murderers persist, to the end, in poetizing and euphuizing. Observe in IV, 3:

Ferryman. I hope to see him one day hanged upon a hill.

Shakebag. See how the sun hath cleared the foggy mist.

Now we have missed the mark of our intent.

Ne'er longed so much to see a running brook
As I to finish Arden's tragedy. . . .

These passages are interesting because they seem to foreshadow several in *Macbeth*. The first five lines of Will's speech, above quoted, with Alice Arden's offer of a "lap of crowns," recalls "the golden round" with which Lady Macbeth saw her husband "crown'd withal"; and Will's further description of her, as steeling "soft mettled cowardice," read in the same connection, forecasts Lady Macbeth's words (I, 7):

Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem. . .

Will's description of the "forlorn traveller," parched with thirst, and longing for the "running brook," coupled with the passage, some thirty lines lower down, in the text of *Arden*:

Greene. Where supped Master Arden?

Mich. At the Nag's Head, at the eighteen pence ordinary.—

may be echoed in the First Murderer's lines in *Macbeth* (III, 3):

Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn;

and it will be noticed that, in both plays, the high poetic quality of the diction is strangely at variance with the characters of the speakers. A further striking parallel occurs in Shakebag's speech, that immediately follows:

But give me place and opportunity,
Such mercy as the starven lioness,

When she is dry sucked of her eager young,
Shows to the prey that next encounters her,
On Arden so much pity will I take—

ideas from which, also with a "suckling" metaphor, occur in *Macbeth* I, 5:

Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
as well as in Lady Macbeth's equally well-known speech (I, 7):

I have given suck, and know. . . .

I incline also to think that Fleance's escape—of which Hollingshed only says that "to avoid further peril he fled into Wales"—may have been suggested by that of Arden, which also occurred during a murderous assault;

Whereupon arose a brawl, and in the tumult Arden escaped us, and passed by unthought on.

Turning to III, 1, of *Arden*, there is striking resemblance between the two passages:

Methinks I see them with their bolstered hair
Staring and grinning in thy gentle face,

and *Macbeth* IV, 1:

For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me—

and a certain similarity, which, however, may be no more than coincidence, between

Arden. What hath occasioned such a fearful cry?

and

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried?¹

¹Cf. *The Spanish Tragedy* (II, 5) *Hieronimo*: "What outcries pluck me from my naked bed."

Significant also is the passage (*Arden* III, 2):

Nay, then let's go sleep, when bugs and fears
Shall kill our courage with their fancy's work

wherein "bugs and fears" thus coupled, together with Will's words

I am so heavy that I scarce can go;
This drowsiness in me bodes little good

may have supplied hints for that wonderful speech in *Macbeth*:

Then be thou jocund, ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight; ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle, with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note—

which reproduces not only the "Arden" atmosphere of night, horror, sleep, and impending tragedy, but has given us, for "drowsiness," "drowsy hums" and has transmuted the creeping bug into the shard-borne beetle. Further, *Macbeth*'s next lines:

Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day

paraphrase, almost, the lines, spoken by Shakebag, with which that second scene of Act III of *Arden* opens:

Black night hath hid the pleasures of the day,
And sheeting darkness overhangs the earth.

The whole of this *Arden* scene (III, 2), in fact, breathes an atmosphere so altogether Shakespearean as fully to explain the assumptions of Swinburne, Knight, and others, that Shakespeare was the

author of the play; but that atmosphere, in my judgment, was created, not by the hand of Shakespeare at work upon Kyd's play, but by the sense of distorted familiarity which a reading of *Arden* inevitably brings to any mind familiar with the text of *Macbeth*, precisely in the same way that my own familiarity with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* lead me to see therein Shakespeare's debt to *Titus Andronicus*.¹

The second scene of the third act of *Arden* contains several phrases, such as "a weak relenting spirit," which—since none of Macbeth's compunctions are to be found in Hollingshed—may have been remembered by Shakespeare during the shaping of *Macbeth*, and the same may have been true of Will's words

Knock with thy sword, perhaps the slave will hear.²

when the knocking on the door episode was brought into the great tragedy. Such was my own impression, and that of others, who saw *Arden* played at the Scala, by the Renaissance Theatre, in 1925. It should be borne in mind that parallels almost trivial in themselves, and negligible when isolated, become evidential by cumulative effect—as these, for example, in the scene of Arden's murder (V, 1):

Alice. Give me the weapon. *Lady M.* Give me the dagger.

¹We shall see another striking example of a similar process, reversed, in Chapter XI on *Pericles*, where I show that *Pericles* was imitated from, not written by, Shakespeare.

²Cf. also Alice Arden's "Hark, hark, they knock; go, Michael, let them in."

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Alice. Fetch water and wash away the blood. *Lady M.* A little water clears us of this deed.

Susan. The blood cleaveth to the ground and will not out. *Lady M.* Out damned spot.

The similarities pointed out in this chapter afford, in my judgment, strong evidence that Shakespeare had the domestic tragedy of *Arden* in mind, when writing the royal tragedy of *Macbeth*.

CHAPTER III

MORE SHAKESPEAREAN BORROWINGS

On the connection that seems to exist between Greene's *Orlando Furioso*, and *As You Like It*.

The Silvius-Phœbe-Rosalind scenes of *As You Like It*, constituting a secondary plot of that play, seem to have contributed ideas for character, situation, and dialogue, to the Orsino-Olivia-Viola episodes, which form the primary plot of *Twelfth Night*.

IN subsequent chapters I propose to deal with the curiously close relationship that exists between Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*, his later comedy, *The Silent Woman*, and *Twelfth Night*; but, before doing so, I should like to call attention to another interesting relationship, which will lead us up to *Twelfth Night*, namely, that between Greene's *Orlando Furioso* and *As You Like It*. That Shakespeare knew Greene's work well, and was influenced by it, to some extent, is, I think, generally admitted; and all the world has heard of Greene's bitter, death-bed complaint against Shakespeare, the "upstart crow beautified with our feathers"; but the passage that lured me into an excursion through Greene's plays, with a view to determining, if possible, whether any Shakespearean origins lay hid there, was the following, from the first scene of the second act of Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*, which comedy, as I shall endeavour to prove in the next chapter, is based largely upon Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

In II, 1, of *Every Man Out of His Humour*,

Puntarvolo, Fastidious, and Carlo Buffone are talking together, concerning "Our court-star there that planet of wit, madona Saviolina"—as Puntarvolo has just called her—a dame who, seemingly, has a little of Olivia about her, since she is called Madona, as the countess was by Feste,¹ and bears a name largely made up of the letters that also spell Olivia:

Fast. Sir, I affirm it to you upon my credit and judgment, she has the most harmonious and musical strain of wit that ever tempted a true ear; and yet, to see!—a rude tongue would profane heaven, if it could.

Punt. I am not ignorant of it, Sir.

Fast. Oh, it flows from her like nectar, and she doth give it that sweet quick grace, and exornation in the composure, that by this good air, as I am an honest man, would I might never stir, sir, but—she does observe as pure a phrase, and use as choice figures in her ordinary conferences, as any be in the *Arcadia*.²

Car. Or rather in Green's works, whence she may steal with more security.

Now all this, with its covert hints at, and echoing phraseology of *Twelfth Night*, seemed to point to a connection that—in Jonson's opinion, at any rate—might exist between one or other of Greene's plays, and the exquisite comedy of Illyria. Those plays, accordingly, I re-read, and failed to find

¹*Twelfth Night*, I, 5.

²Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, book 2. The story of Zelmane, who describes herself as "a nobleman's son of Iberia"—which may have become Illyria. These lines, spoken by Pyrocles, apply well to Viola: "I marvelled to see her receive my commandments with sighs, and yet do them with cheerfulness; sometimes answering me in such riddles, as I then thought a childish inexperience; but since returning to my remembrance they have come more cleere unto my knowledge."

Illyria, on the Dalmatian coast, was a Roman province in 167 B.C.

what I sought, but I did observe, in *Orlando Furioso*, certain remarkable parallels with *As You Like It*, one of these being the comparisons made by Rosalind, between the low opinion of women held by her "old religious uncle"—"for so many giddy offences as he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal"—and the high one held by the young man, "who abuses our plants with carving Rosalind on their barks"—and, in *Orlando Furioso*, the diatribes made against the sex, concerning Angelica, the counterpart of Rosalind, by Orgalio, who describes woman as, "Unconstant, mutable, having their loves hanging in their eyelids; that as they are got with a look, so they are lost again with a wink." Orlando, in the same scene of Greene's play, develops the theme, with the speech beginning,

Fœmineum servile genus, crudele, superbum.
Discourteous women, nature's fairest ill. . . .

From this point onwards there are many other suggestions of *As You Like It*. Orlando's rending of the shepherd (II, 1), and his entry "with a leg" torn from the victim's body, followed by these two lines:

Orl. Villain, provide me straight a lion's skin,
Thou seest I now am mighty Hercules—

has, very possibly, I think, some connection with the lioness of *As You Like It*, slain by Oliver; and the same may be argued of the slaying of Brandimart, by Orlando (III, 2):

No, I am challenged the single fight—
Sirrah, is't you challenge me the combat?

particularly when it is remembered that three characters, Charles, Orlando, and Oliver, who all appear, or are mentioned, in the last scene of *Orlando Furioso*, appear also—by name, that is—in the first Scene of *As You Like It*. I am aware that Shakespeare, in all probability, drew upon Lodge's *Rosalynde* for much of *As You Like It*, and that the romance contains the hanging of verses on the trees, and other episodes found in the Shakespearean comedy; but it is worth noting that *Orlando Furioso* (II, 1) also refers to the marring of trees by the writing of a lady's name upon them.

There remain more parallels to be pointed out. The entry of Tom, dressed like Angelica, at the end of II, 3, hints at Rosalind's disguise, and the next scene (IV, 1), gives us matter concerning Angelica's threatened exile, in words spoken by Marsilius, which, while common to pastorals, are wholly applicable to Rosalind.

The hapless maid, banished from out my land,
Wanders about in woods and ways unknown.

Passing on to the fifth Act, Marsilius' first speech, in the first scene:

—For dear we prize the smallest drop of blood—

followed by the entry of Orlando, "with a scarf before his face"; and, in the next scene, a line by the same speaker,

These men are pirates, dipt within the blood
Of kings most royal

—followed by Orlando's victorious battle with Oliver, and the removal of his scarf, "to assure you

that I am no devil," are all episodes that, taken together, were, very possibly, used by Shakespeare, in shaping such incidents, in *As You Like It*, as the fight between Oliver and the lioness, the bloody napkin—the sight of which caused Rosalind to swoon—and, perhaps, also Oliver's unconvincing reformation.

Leaving Greene's play, and passing on to *Twelfth Night*, I venture upon a suggestion, which, so far as I know, has not been made before, namely, that there exists also some connection between *Twelfth Night* and certain scenes of *As You Like It*. Which play, in fact, preceded the other, we do not certainly know; but they seem to have been written within a very short time of one another—*As You Like It* probably in 1599, and *Twelfth Night*, perhaps, in the same year, or in 1598.¹ They may

¹For more detailed consideration of the date of *Twelfth Night*, see chap. IV, pp. 53-4.

It must be remembered that comedy scenes of cross-wooing, such as you get in *Twelfth Night*, were already quite familiar to English playgoers, by the end of the sixteenth century. Similar situations are to be found in Plautus and Menander; and English dramatists, Shakespeare among them, were using versions of Italian plays, such as *Gl'Inganni*, and *Gl'Ingannati*, dating within a few years from the middle of the sixteenth century and containing incidents resembling those of *Twelfth Night*. Shakespeare himself, in the opinion of Sir Israel Gollancz, used, for the general frame-work of his comedy, an English version of the story, translated from Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*.

Professor A. W. Reed, in his recent book upon *Early Tudor Drama* (p. 100) provides the following interesting paragraph:

"Equally striking is the discovery, before 1500, in a romantic and entirely secular drama, of a comic underplot as clearly defined as that of *Twelfth Night*, and conceived in the same spirit. We are, in fact, in the presence of a new thing, the first English romantic play—a play based on an English translation of a French version of an Italian work of fiction, containing an underplot in which A and B make love to the maid while their masters seek the hand of the mistress." Professor Fleay thinks that the Viola story was drafted as early as 1594-95, which is about the time of the first publication of *Orlando Furioso*.

even have been written almost concurrently; since it is quite possible that Shakespeare sometimes had two, or more than two, plays upon the stocks at the same time.

Be that as it may, I find in the relations between Silvius and Phœbe—forming an under-plot of *As You Like It*—certain, to me, very interesting and suggestive parallels with *Twelfth Night*, in which Phœbe stands for the haughty Olivia, Silvius for Orsino, and Rosalind for Viola—the episodes beginning with scene five of the third act, continuing through the first few lines only of the scene that follows (IV, 1), and being taken up again during a part of IV, 3.

The parallel begins with the first entry of Silvius, upon his opening lines,

Sil. Sweet Phœbe, do not scorn me; do not, Phœbe;
Say that you love me not, but say not so
In bitterness—

to which Phœbe's reply:

I would not be thy executioner,
I fly thee, for I would not injure thee.
Thou tell'st me there is murder in mine eye—

with its vain pleading of a lover, against the obduracy of a proud woman, who does not love in return, repeats closely the relations between Orsino and Olivia; Phœbe's line last above quoted, concerning murder in her eye, recalling readily the duke's words, to Olivia (*Twelfth Night*, V, 1):

Why should I not, had I the heart to do it,
Like to the Egyptian thief, at point of death,

Kill what I love—a savage jealousy
That sometime savours nobly.¹

Moreover, Silvius's reply—to which Rosalind, counterpart of Viola, who has just entered, is listening—

If ever—as that ever may be near—
You meet in some fresh cheek the power of fancy;
Then shall you know the wounds invisible
That love's keen arrows make.

is not far from Orsino's (*Twelfth Night*, II, 4)

If ever thou shalt love,
In the sweet pangs of it remember me:

And when Rosalind, coming forward, intervenes in the conversation, she uses phrases that again are echoed in *Twelfth Night*; such as, "Who might be your mother?" comparable with the duke's, "What is your parentage?" and

You are a thousand times a properer man
Than she a woman;

which is near to Olivia's

Your wife is like to reap a proper man.

Further, in Rosalind's exit speech:

I pray you do not fall in love with me
. . . . If you will know my house,
'Tis at the tuft of Olives here hard by—

you get, not only a counterpart of the relative positions of Olivia and Viola—a woman falling in love with another woman disguised as a man—

¹The idea is repeated in *Othello*.

but, possibly, in "the tuft of olives," a hint for, or an echo of, Olivia's name, which, by the way, is presumably a feminine form of Oliver.¹

The approximations, in the two plays, continue; for Phœbe's, "Thou canst talk of love so well," may be easily matched with the duke's "Thou dost speak masterly"; and the same woman's, "I'll employ thee too," and Silvius' protestation, "So holy and so perfect is my love," need little ingenuity, to fit them to the opening scenes of *Twelfth Night*.

It is at the end of Act III, however, in Phœbe's last long speech, that the parallels of thought and diction are most close; for, of the first eighteen lines of it, there is scarcely one that cannot be matched from *Twelfth Night*. The passage runs as follows:

Phæ. Think not I love him, though I ask for him;
 'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well;
 But what care I for words? yet words do well
 When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.
 It is a pretty youth: not very pertty.
 But, sure, he's proud, and yet his pride becomes him.
 He'll make a proper man: the best thing in him
 Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
 Did make offence his eye did heal it up.
 He is not very tall; yet for his years he's tall.
 His leg is but so so; and yet 'tis well:
 There was a pretty redness in his lip,
 A little riper and more lusty red
 Than that mix'd in his cheek; 'twas just the difference

¹The generally recognized source of Olivia's name is, I think, the first part of Emmanuel Forde's *Parisinus, the Renowned Prince of Bohemia*, London, 1598. Olivia is queen of Thessaly, and Violetta is the name of a lady who, unknown to her lover, disguises herself as a page to follow him. She also, like Viola, is shipwrecked.

Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.
 There be some women, Silvius, had they mark'd him
 In parcels as I did, would have gone near
 To fall in love with him.

No reader, who is familiar with the text of *Twelfth Night*, can fail to see in this speech—when they are pointed out to him—a continuous stream of verbal resemblances, of which these are some of the more striking. Compare “peevish boy,” with Olivia’s “peevish messenger”; “But sure he’s proud,” with Viola’s “You are too proud”; “He’ll make a proper man,” with Olivia’s “Your wife is like to reap a proper man”; “It is a pretty youth,” with the same lady’s, “a gracious person”; “For his years he’s tall,” with Sir Toby’s, “He’s as tall a man as any’s in Illyria”—while the last six lines are almost a paraphrase of

’Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
 Nature’s own sweet and cunning hand laid on—

Shakespeare’s genius here having warmed itself at its own fires.¹ Further, the last two lines of that same speech, by Phœbe, have about them a ring of the *Twelfth Night* conspirators.

I’ll write to him a very taunting letter,
 And thou shalt bear it, wilt thou, Silvius?

is strongly reminiscent of Sir Toby’s, “Taunt him with the licence of ink”; and her last lines, closing the act,

¹Mrs. Jameson, in *Characteristics of Shakespeare’s Women*, has pointed out that “we find two amongst the most poetical passages of the play (*As You Like It*) appropriated to Phœbe—the taunting speech to Silvius and the description of Rosalind in her page’s costume.”

I will be bitter with him and passing short.
Go with me, Silvius.

bring us very near to Sir Andrew, with his

I warrant there's vinegar and pepper in't.

Passing on, to the opening of the fourth act of *As You Like It*, the talk therein, between Rosalind and Jaques, has the same quality of "humorous" melancholy, sadness, and wistful silence, which we associate with Viola in love.

Ros. They say you are a melancholy fellow.

Jaq. I am so; I do love it better than laughing.

Ros. Those that are in extremity of either are abominable fellows, and betray themselves to every modern censure worse than drunkards.

Jaq. Why 'tis good to be sad and say nothing.

Ros. Why then, 'tis good to be a post.

and so on, until Jaques, analysing his own melancholy, concludes:

My often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness.

Later, with the re-entry of Silvius, in the third scene of the fourth act, and his duologue with Rosalind, that follows, similar themes and allusions are again introduced, and expressed, almost in the language of *Twelfth Night*. Here are some typical lines, the analogies of which with Shakespeare's comedy of Illyria will be apparent to all who have cared to follow me thus far:

Ros. She says I am not fair, that I lack manners,
She calls me proud, and that she could not love me,
Was man as rare as phoenix.

This is a letter of your own device.

I say she never did invent this letter.

This is a man's invention and his hand.

Why, 'tis a boisterous and a cruel style,
A style for challengers; why, she defies me,
Like Turk to Christian.

If the scorn of your bright eyne
Have power to raise such love in mine,
Alack, in me what strange effect
Would they work in mild aspect.
Whiles you chide me, I did love;
How then might your prayers move.
He that brings this love to thee
Little knows this love in me

If she love me, I charge her to love thee.

Further, in the duologue between Oliver and Celia, that follows upon Oliver's entrance (IV, 3), it seems to me that we have more echoes of the famous scene, in which Viola pleads Orsino's cause, before Olivia; these lines, especially, being significant:

Oliv. Good morrow, fair ones, pray you, if you know,
Where in the purlieus of this forest stands
A sheep-cote fenced about with olive-trees?
Cel. West of this place, down in the neighbouring bottom.
The rank of osiers by the murmuring stream,
Left on your right hand, brings you to the place.

Here, it may be, Shakespeare gives us, not only another hint for the source of Olivia's name, but also his first mental picture of the cottage, the

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osiers, and the murmuring stream, which, as I like to think, even though I think it alone, are the beginnings of one of the loveliest passages in all the range of our lyric poetry:

Build me a willow cabin at your gate,
And call upon the soul within the house.

To sum up, then, very briefly, the arguments set forth in this chapter, it seems to me, on the whole, more than probable that Shakespeare, when writing *As You Like It*, had *Orlando Furioso* in mind; and that, when shaping the Olivia-Viola-Orsino scenes of *Twelfth Night*, he remembered consciously the Silvius-Phœbe-Rosalind episodes of the Forest of Arden: and these things he did, not, as in Jonson's case—to which we shall come—by reason of limited imagination; but rather through indolence, through a custom of plot-borrowing, acquired, perhaps, during early hack-work upon other men's plays; and also by opportunity, and the exigencies of haste.

CHAPTER IV

"EVERY MAN OUT OF HIS HUMOUR" AND "TWELFTH NIGHT"

Shows that *Every Man Out of His Humour* contains many imitations, by Jonson, of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

THAT Ben Jonson, whose dealings with two of Shakespeare's plays I am about to consider, greatly, though with reservations, admired his rival, may, I think, be taken for granted; nor is there cause to question the complete sincerity of Jonson's eulogy in the Folio; but, equally, there can be no doubt at all that, in the heat of strong professional rivalry between the pair, Jonson bitterly envied Shakespeare's popular romantic successes, coveted that unfailing choice of happy-sounding words, and the facile creation of living, appealing characters, which won for Shakespeare in his own life-time, so many hearts, and was to win for him at last, undisputed lordship of the world's drama. These facts, however, did not prevent Jonson—armed, as he was, with classical learning that Shakespeare did not possess—from regarding his fellow dramatist as altogether inferior to himself in understanding, and as lamentably deficient in erudition, as well as in art. Frequently throughout his career, and particularly during outbreaks of "The War of the Theatres," we find him allied with a school of writers bitterly hostile to

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Shakespeare, and ever ready to belittle and disparage his work.

These periodical outbreaks of Elizabethan spleen, however, need not be taken too seriously, nor quite at their face value. Dramatists cannot afford to be independent of the public that support them; and at a time when the stage was also, to some extent, the daily newspaper, and the debating platform, personalities, unquestionably popular, served the double purpose of amusing patrons, and of scoring off the rival party.

If it gave them (the actors) meat,
Or got them clothes, 'tis well, that was their end¹

The malice of actor or author, though apparently hot by day, must often have been cooled at night, over many cups, circulating among the contending parties at the "Mermaid" or the "Boar's Head"—a process of convivial oblivion akin to that by which modern politicians abuse one another roundly at party luncheons, preparatory to dining together amicably the same evening. Such an analogy helps us to account, in part, for the strange fact that, as I am about to show, Jonson was permitted to put on at Shakespeare's theatre a play in which the Stratford man's romantic idealism, and methods of playwriting generally, were laughed at by a rival dramatist of quite opposite genius²—one whose innate rationalism and cynical mistrust of men, and still more of women, made Shakespeare's characters, to him, absurdly false and unreal. Shakespeare, on the

¹Epilogue to Jonson's *Poetaster*.

²Mr. W. Poel holds that the anomaly of anti-Shakespearean plays being performed at the Globe Theatre may be in part accounted for by the value to that theatre of Jonson's prestige and influence at court.

contrary, a mind as much more gentle and refined than Jonson's, as it was also more tolerant, pliant, percipient, and receptive, must have seen clearly through his rival, and would be able to make full allowance for his vagaries. It seems probable, indeed, that a part of the exasperation which was perpetually simmering in Jonson's thoughts against Shakespeare, was due to the easy and irritatingly good-humoured nonchalance with which he turned aside charges of plagiarism, and very possibly more serious charges also.¹

Jonson's first attempts at drama probably found him, temporarily, under Shakespeare's influence, among the Romantics; and it is significant that his earliest known play, *The Case is Altered*—a work which he never claimed, nor published as his own—contains a character, Rachel, conceived more in the romantic Shakespearean vein than were any women of his later works. Romanticism, however, could not hold Jonson for long. Eager acquisition and absorption of classical learning, working upon an intensely satirical and rationalistic temperament—together, no doubt, with a tinge of native jealousy—drew him swiftly, and permanently, away from Shakespeare and his fellow romantics; so that, when the superficially bitter, though, at bottom, only half-serious battle of the wits, known as the "War of The Theatres,"²

¹Jonson on "poet-age"—"and told of this he slights it."

²Mr. William Poel kindly supplies me with the following pertinent remarks concerning the War of The Theatres:

"The War was brought about by the popularity with the citizens of Shakespeare's historical plays, which he had recently been engaged upon, and which the Queen and the Privy Councillors objected to, as reflecting upon the actions and morals of princes. It may have been as a set-off that the Queen permitted and financed the performances of

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broke out, Jonson naturally allied himself with the university men against Shakespeare and his fellow ignorants. The first of his three dramatic contributions to that now forgotten quarrel was *Every Man Out of His Humour*, put on, at the Globe, apparently, in 1599—a comedy which, though, on the face of it, original, is actually indebted, for imitations and borrowings innumerable, to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. It is a strange and interesting play, wholly satirical in purpose, and largely concerned with contemporary characters, the first name upon the list, Asper, standing for Jonson himself.

He is of an ingenious and free spirit, eager and constant in reproof, without fear controlling the worlds abuses: One whom no servile hope of gain, or frosty apprehension of danger, can make to be a parasite, either to time, place, or opinion.

Taking the identification for granted, it seems to follow that Jonson was one of the actors in, as well as author of, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, if we may judge from the line spoken by Asper in the dialogued prologue

Now, gentlemen, I go
To turn an actor and a humorist.

To my mind, however, the most interesting character among the persons of this comedy, is neither Jonson himself nor any of the other prin-

her chapel boys at the Blackfriars, and that Jonson was encouraged to write satirical plays, depreciating the work of The Globe Players. The War of the Theatres was, in part, a sham got up to facilitate retaliation by the Globe Players. The Essex conspiracy temporarily put an end to it."

cipals, but one of the couple that close the list, namely Cordatus, who, with his friend Mitis, is not precisely an actor in the play, but a spectator present on the stage. The function of the couple, in Jonson's words, is

as censors to sit here, . . .
Observe what I present, and liberally
Speak your opinion upon every scene,
As it shall pass the view of those spectators.

These censors are thus described.

Cordatus, the author's friend; a man inly acquainted with the scope and drift of his plot; of a discreet and understanding judgment; and has the place of a moderator. *Mitis* is a person of no action, and therefore we afford him no character.

For both these I would claim the reader's attention, because, although the play is at once a general satire upon the Shakespearean school of drama, a deliberate imitation of a contemporary and popular Shakespearean comedy, containing also an attack upon Shakespeare's acquisition of a coat-of-arms,¹ I am inclined, nevertheless, to think, contradictory as the statement may sound, that Cordatus stands, to some extent, for Shakespeare himself; and that the two characters together link themselves, in a way very remarkable, and, I believe, hitherto little suspected, with what is, perhaps, the most popular of all Shakespearean comedies, *Twelfth Night*.

When I came to examine this play, *Every Man*

¹This attack is in the first printed quarto, but may have been omitted from the acting version. The same may be said of the Cordatus-Mitis duologues.

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Out of His Humour, the name Cordatus¹ at once aroused my interest and curiosity ; not only by reason of the eulogistic description, so applicable to Shakespeare, as a man "of discreet and understanding judgment," and "the author's friend," but also because—as I hope to show, in a subsequent chapter—Jonson, in his play *Sejanus*, written in 1603, is going to give a similar name, Cordus, to a character who, in my judgment, probably stands for Shakespeare, and, in his own person, defends Shakespeare's play, *Julius Caesar*, which, because it was political propaganda on behalf of Essex's conspiracy, had brought Shakespeare, and the Globe company, two years before, into very serious jeopardy.

I am inclined to think that the duologue between Mitis and Cordatus, at the close of the Induction, may be deliberately intended to set forth, in the character of Cordatus, Shakespeare's free and easy theories concerning the unities of dramatic construction. The passage opens as follows:—

Mit. You have seen his play, Cordatus, pray you, how is it ?

Cor. Faith, sir, I must refrain to judge; only this I can say of it, 'tis strange, and of a particular kind by itself, somewhat like *Vetus Comoedia*; a work that hath boundteously pleased me; how it will answer the general expectation, I know not.

Mit. Does he observe all the laws of comedy in it?

Cor. What laws mean you?

¹Lewis and Short's *Latin Dictionary* gives the meaning of Cordatus—wise, prudent, judicious, sagacious. *Egregie cordatus homo*, Enn. ap. Cis. Tusc. i, 9, 18. The name should be read, I think, in conjunction with that of Cordus in *Sejanus*, though the latter seems to be much more definitely Shakespeare than is Cordatus, who may be Chapman.

Mit. Why, the equal division of it into acts and scenes, according to the Terentian manner; his true number of actors: the furnishing of the scene with Grex or chorus, and that the whole argument fall within the compass of a days business.

Cor. O no, these are too nice observations.

Mit. They are such as must be received, by your favour, or it cannot be authentic.

Cor. Troth, I can discern no such necessity.

The long speech of Cordatus that follows suggests sounder knowledge of the classics than Shakespeare probably possessed; and it may be that Chapman, if anyone, and not Shakespeare, is the original whom Jonson had in mind; but, putting aside the question of Cordatus's identity, and settling down to a reading of *Every Man Out of His Humour*, I had not got far into the first act before becoming conscious of Shakespearean atmosphere; one of the first lines to hold my attention being Sogliardo's

Signia Insulo Sogliardo; methinks it sounds well—

which recalled the Steward's "To be Count Malvolio"; while Carlo's words, a few lines lower down:

But, Sogliardo, if you affect to be a gentleman indeed, you must observe all the rare qualities, humours, and compliments of a gentleman—

seemed also to echo, or to be echoed, in *Twelfth Night*, as a second glance at the italicized words will show:

Carlo. . . . *As you are a true gentleman*, at every cast; you may do it with a safe conscience, I warrant you.

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Sog. O admirable rare! he cannot choose but be a gentleman that *hath these excellent gifts*, more, more, I beseech you.

Carlo. You must endeavour to feed cleanly at your ordinary, *sit melancholy*, and pick your teeth *when you cannot speak*.

Phrases from *Twelfth Night* so close to these as Sir Andrew's "As I am true knight," Sir Toby's "Hath all the good gifts of nature," and Shakespeare's play upon Viola's melancholy, and forced silence, came, I thought, too nearly to the above quotation to be set down as mere coincidence; and when, on the next page, I found Carlo advising Sogliardo to "pretend alliance with a courtier," as Malvolio also does with a countess, and to "hire a fellow with a great chain¹ . . . to bring you letters, feigned from such a nobleman, or such a knight, or such a lady, to their worshipful . . . Signior Insulo Sogliardo"; and, then, that one of Sogliardo's familiars "breaks it (the letter) up as 'twere in a jest, and reads it publicly at the table"—which is pretty much what happened to Malvolio, though he read the letter, not at a table, but in a garden—then, what hitherto had been no more than surmise became almost certainty.

Very little further reading settled all doubt. The two plays teem with parallels, some near and obvious—like this, by Carlo: "A shallow fool, he has no more brain than a butterfly," which becomes, or is drawn from, "an ordinary fool that has no more brains than a stone"²—others repeating one another from afar, as when Carlo's, "He answers

¹*Sir Toby.* "Go rub your chain with crumbs."—*Twelfth Night*, II, 3.

²Malvolio.—*Twelfth Night*, I, 5.

him like an echo," is heard again, far off, in "Halloo your name to the reverberate hills."

But, with the entry of Sordido (I, 1, p. 72) that "wretched hob-nailed chuff, whose recreation is reading of almanacks; and felicity, foul weather," there follows a more intimate and striking connection.

Enter SORDIDO with an Almanack in his hand.

Sord. O rare! good, good, good, good, good!

I thank my stars, I thank my stars for it.

Mac. Said I not true? doth not his passion speak

Out of my divination? O my senses,

Why lose you not your powers, and become

Dull'd if not deaded, with this spectacle?

I know him, it is Sordido, the farmer,

A boor, and brother to that swine was here.

Sord. Excellent, excellent, excellent! as I would wish, as I would wish.

Mac. See how the strumpet fortune tickles him,

And makes him swoon with laughter, O, O, O!

Sord. Ha, ha ha! I will not sow my grounds this year. Let me see, what harvest shall we have? *June, July?*

Mac. What, is't a prognostication raps him so?

Sord. *The 20, 21, 22 days, rain and wind.* O good, good! *the 23 and 24, rain and some wind, good! the 25 rain, good still! 26, 27, 28, wind and some rain; would it had been rain and some wind well, 'tis good, when it can be no better. 29 inclining to rain, inclining to rain! that's not so good now. 30 and 31 wind and no rain. No rain! 'slid, stay: this is worse and worse: What says he of St. Swithins? turn back, look, saint Swithin's: no rain!*

Mac. O, here's a precious, dirty, damned rogue,

That fats himself with expectation

Of rotten weather, and unseason'd hours;

And he is rich for it, an elder brother!

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His barns are full, his ricks and mows well trod,
His garners crack with store! O, 'tis well; ha ha ha!
A plague consume thee, and thy house!

Sord. O here, St. Swithins, the 15 day, variable weather,
for the most part rain, good! for the most part rain: why
it should rain forty days after, now, more or less, . . .
well, we must be patient, and attend the heavens pleasure,
would it were more though; the 22, 23, great
tempests of rain, thunder, and lightning
O good again, past expectation good
I thank my blessed angel; never, never
Laid I (a) penny better out than this . . .

Now that the reader has been given the clue, he will not fail to observe that this passage is just another version of the reading of the letter by Malvolio, which is either taken from it, or from which it is taken. This "rogue that fats himself with expectation of rotten weather" is Olivia's steward, fattening himself, in advance, with expectation of his lady's favours, and of the final baffling through his own puritan influence, of Sir Toby and the rest. Sordido's second line;

I thank my stars, I thank my stars for it

is repeated by Malvolio, "I thank my stars I am happy." Macilente's

See how the strumpet fortune tickles him
And makes him swoon with laughter, O, O, O!

refers, as Malvolio does, to "Fortune all is fortune"; and matches also Fabian's line, "Look how imagination blows him"; while the three O's, at the end of the next line, are heard again in this passage from the letter scene:

Mal. A should follow, but O does.

Fab. And O shall end I hope.

Sir To. Ay, or I'll cudgel him, and make him cry O!

Moreover, the many references, by Sordido to "rain and wind," seem to be echoed in, or to derive from, the clown's song, at the end of *Twelfth Night*, "Hey, ho, the wind and the rain!"

Lastly, the following lines, the first two of which close the above long quotation from *Every Man*:

I thank my blessed angel, never, never

Laid I (a) penny better out than this,

To purchase this dear book

Since in it is contain'd the very life,

Blood, strength, and sinews of my happiness

and so forth, matches Malvolio's crescendo, and final burst of exultation—"Daylight and champain discovers not more"—at the close of the letter scene.

The parallels with Shakespeare's comedy continue, as I shall presently show, throughout Jonson's play; but we had best now pause to consider, for a moment, which of the two playwrights is the more likely to have borrowed from the other.

At this stage of our enquiry, the most natural assumption, of course, will be, that Shakespeare used Jonson's material, since *Twelfth Night* is usually dated about 1601, whereas *Every Man Out of His Humour* seems to have been completed about the end of 1599, at latest, and acted, probably at the Globe, in the winter of 1600.¹ My

¹Burbage's Theatre in Shoreditch had been pulled down at the end of 1598, Shakespeare's company migrating to The Curtain during the building of The Globe.—(Herford and Simpson's *Jonson*.)

own opinion, is, that *Twelfth Night* and *Every Man Out of His Humour* were written very nearly together;¹ but the remainder of this chapter will, I think, prove that Shakespeare's comedy is the earlier of the two, and that the close parallels between the plays are wholly due to plagiarisms by Jonson, from his rival. Strange as it may seem, to modern minds, that Shakespeare should have acquiesced—and perhaps played at his own theatre—in a kind of imitation of his own popular comedy; such is, nevertheless, the conclusion from which, in my judgment, there is no escape, and which, after all, is but another example of the extraordinary, and hitherto insufficiently recognized, anomalies and contradictions of the Elizabethan stage.²

Let us now return to an examination of the many parallels, which, whoever the plagiarist may have been, unquestionably exist between the two plays, taking up the text again, at the close of Sordido's almanack-reading speech, which, as we have seen, is based upon the episode of Malvolio with the letter. Here it is worthy of note that the three lines, at the end of the speech, spoken in praise of Sordido's almanack, recall another three from the closing scene of *The Merchant of Venice*, relative to Nerissa's ring.

¹Sir Israel Gollancz, in *The Book Of Homage to Shakespeare*, points out that the original of Malvolio may have some connection with Sir Ambrose Willoughby, Queen Elizabeth's Squire of the Presence, whose quarrel with the Earl of Southampton is referred to in a letter from Rowland White dated January, 1598.

²My own feeling is that Shakespeare would have been indifferent on the matter, or might even have connived at a sort of travesty of his own play by Jonson, provided always that he saw money or advertisement, or both, to be gained thereby.

Sord. Blest be the house wherein I bought this book;
His studies happy that composed the book,
And the man fortunate that sold the book.

The lines from *The Merchant*, written, probably, some three years before, in 1596, run thus:

Portia. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring;¹

and they show, I think, that, in this instance, at any rate, Jonson, and not Shakespeare, was the borrower.

The only other very Malvolian lines, that I have noted in this first act, are in Sordido's second speech from its end:

Hind. They will exclaim against you.

Sord. Ay, their exclaims

Move me as much, as thy breath moves a mountain.

Poor woman, they hiss at me, whilst I at home

Can be contented to applaud myself—

which lines are in substance, though not in phraseology, very close to the mind of that fantastical steward "sick of self love":

Go, hang yourselves all, you are idle, shallow things.

I am not of your element, you shall know more hereafter

—(*Twelfth Night*, III, 4.)

Before twenty lines of Act II have been read, the parallels with *Twelfth Night* recommence; the first of them being Fastidious Brisk's:

¹Such tricks of iteration were in vogue in the earlier Elizabethan drama. They are to be found, e.g., in *The Spanish Tragedy*.

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Whither should I ride but to the court?—

which recalls Viola's intention, expressed to the sea-captain, to "serve this duke," while, three lines farther down, Fastidious's exclamation, "This knight dwells in Elysium," is echoed by Viola, in the same scene with the sea-captain (*Twelfth Night*, I, 2):

My brother he is in Elysium.

Here it is, perhaps, also worthy of remark, that Fastidious's: "A fine little fiery slave, he runs like a—oh, excellent, excellent!—with the very sound of a spur," which occurs a few lines lower down, is echoed by Sir Toby, in the last line of *Twelfth Night*, I, 3, when he applauds Sir Andrew's caperings, with the same word, "Excellent!" and, in actual performance upon the stage, is spurred to further efforts by Sir Toby, with the exhortation, "Higher!" accompanied by proddings from his stick.¹

Moreover, bearing in mind the close proximity, in *Twelfth Night*, of the quotations above set down, to Viola's "Patience on a monument" speech, these two phrases of Sogliardo, upon the next page,² are worth noting—"I'll keep it for a monument," and "I'll have a tomb, now I think on't."

The next two pages contain little that has any obviously direct connection with *Twelfth Night*; though certain phrases, such as; "I am resolute to keep a page"; "Then the waiting gentlewoman

¹For example, as played at St. James's Theatre, by the Robertson Clan on May 17, 1927, with Robert Atkins as Toby, and Norman Forbes as Sir Andrew; two of the best representatives of these parts in recent years.

²"Everyman Edition," p. 77.

she looks out"; and "They are come from hunting," seem to ring familiarly in one's ear. It is the entrance of Puntarvolo, the "vain-glorious knight, over-englishing his travels, and wholly consecrated to singularity; the very Jacob's staff of compliment," that brings us, obviously, back to Illyria again. A waiting gentlewoman appears at the window; and this close relative of Orsino exclaims:

Stay; mine eye hath, on the instant, through the bounty of the window, received the form of a nymph, in whom, as the following dialogue clearly shows, one can recognize Viola, with variations.

Punt. 'Tis a most sumptuous and stately edifice. Of what years is the knight, fair damsel?

Gent. Faith, much about your years, Sir.

Punt. What complexion, or what stature bears he?

Gent. Of your stature, and very near upon your complexion.

Punt. Mine is melancholy.

Car. So is the dog's, just.

Punt. And doth argue constancy, chiefly in love.

a duologue which reappears in *Twelfth Night*, in references to Viola's melancholy, and in these lines (*Twelfth Night*, II, 4):

Save in the constant image of the creature
That is beloved,

and, more particularly, in the well-known passage, between Viola and the Duke.

Duke. What kind of woman is't?

Vio. Of your complexion.

Duke. She is not worth thee, then. What years, i' faith?

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Vio. About your years, my lord.

Duke. Too old, by heaven. . . .

At the bottom of the same page occur more dialogues, which we can trace to, or hear an echo of in, *Twelfth Night*.

Punt. Would I might but see her face!

Car. She should let down a glass, from the window at that word and request him to look on't

Punt. Doubtless the gentleman is most exact, and absolutely qualified; doth the castle contain him?

Gent. No, sir, he is from home, but his lady is within.

Punt. His lady! what, is she fair, splendidious and amiable?

Gent. O, Lord, sir.

Punt. Prithee, dear nymph, intreat her beauties to shine on this side of the building.

[*Exit WAITING-GENTLEWOMAN from the window.*]

Car. That he may erect a new dial of compliment, with his gnomons and his puntilios.

All this vaguely shadows forth Viola's mission, on Orsino's behalf, to Olivia, and, quite clearly, Viola's request to Olivia:

Good madam, let me see your face.

Moreover, Carlo's:

Look, look, as if he went in a frame;

may well have been suggested by Olivia's:

We will draw the curtain and show you the picture.

At the bottom of the same page, from Lady Puntarvolo's appearance to her exit, you get a scene which parallels the relations between the Duke and Olivia, with a little of Viola's ecstasy thrown in.

LADY PUNTARVOLO *appears at the window.*

Punt. What more than heavenly pulchritude is this?

What magazine or treasury of bliss?

Dazzle, you organs to my optic sense,

To view a creature of such eminence.

O, I am planet-struck, and in your sphere

A brighter star than Venus doth appear.

Fast. How, in verse!

Car. An ecstasy, an ecstasy, man.

Lady P. [above]. Is your desire to speak with me, Sir Knight?

Car. He will tell you that anon; neither his brain nor his body are yet moulded for an answer.

Punt. Most debonnair and luculent lady, I decline me as low as the basis of your altitude.

Cor. He makes congies to his wife in geometrical proportions.

Mit. Is it possible there should be any such humorist?

Cor. Very easily possible, sir, you see there is.

Punt. I have scarce collected my spirits, but lately scattered in the admiration of your form, to which, if the bounties of your mind be any way responsible, I doubt not but my desires shall find a smooth and secure passage. I am a poor knight-errant, lady, that hunting in an adjacent forest, was, by adventure, in the pursuit of a hart, brought to this place; which hart, dear madam, escaped by enchantment: the evening approaching, myself and servant wearied, my suit is, to enter your fair castle and refresh me.

Lady. Sir knight, albeit it be not usual with me, chiefly in the absence of a husband, to admit any entrance to strangers, yet . . . I am resolved to entertain you . . .

Here Jonson seems to be deliberately parodying Shakespeare, and not Shakespeare borrowing from Jonson; because, while it is easy, and natural enough, for any parodist to transmute

Viola's "Most radiant, exquisite and unmatchable beauty" into Puntarvolo's "Most debonair and luculent lady," it is impossible to imagine satirically conceived lines, such as those, inspiring Shakespeare's idealistically poetical scene;¹ and if any reader will bring up against me my own theory, that *Titus Andronicus* was Shakespeare's basis for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, my answer is, that *Titus* was a serious theme. A writer may readily transpose from the serious key to the playful; but the playful, or satiric, provides little basis for the serious.

In the passage last above quoted, the parallels are so many, and so transparent, as hardly to need pointing out. Jonson's knight-errant, "in pursuit of a hart," which "escaped by enchantment" is Orsino, "turned into a hart" (*Twelfth Night*, I, 8) by the enchantment of a first sight of Olivia; and the lady's

Sir knight, albeit it be not usual with me, chiefly in the
absence of a husband, to admit any entrance to strangers.

matches Olivia's refusal to open to Orsino either her gate or her affections: Carlo's exclamation, moreover, a few lines lower down:

What! with speaking a speech of your own penning?
recalls at once Viola, as the duke's protestant, to Olivia (*Twelfth Night*, I, 5):

I would be loath to cast away my speech, for besides that

¹Shakespeare, when borrowing from another play, does not usually change the medium. *Arden of Feversham*, Kyd's *Hamlet*, and *King Lear*, are as tragic when he has finished with them, as they were before, the romance *Rosalynde* remaining a romance in the form of *As You Like It*, etc.

it is excellently well penned, I have taken great pains to con it.

Upon the heels of this follows another reminiscence:

Carlo. 'Slud, I think he feeds her with porridge, I: she could never have such a thick brain else.

Sogl. Why is porridge so hurtful, signior?

Carl. O, nothing under heaven more prejudicial to those ascending subtle powers, or doth sooner abate that which we call *acumen ingenii*, than your gross fare.

which brings Sir Andrew directly into our comparison.

Sir To. O knight, thou lackest a cup of canary: when did I see thee so put down?

Sir An. Never in your life, I think; unless you see canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has: but I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit.

Sir To. No question.

Upon the page that follows (83), the echoes again become somewhat faint; yet they are clearly audible, and connect with *Twelfth Night*, III, 1, as the following extracts, set side by side, will show:

Punt. Your vouchsafed abiding here

Viola. Your own most pregnant and vouchsafed ear.

Punt. My house stood on the Muses hill.

Clown. My house doth stand by the church.

Fast. As if I were made lord of the Indies.

Maria. The new map with the augmentation of the Indies.

Further, that last line, quoted from Maria, suggests the Malvolio plot, with its accompaniment

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of yellow stockings, an idea at once repeated in the following lines:

Fung. [looking at *Fastidious Brisk*]. By heaven, it is a very fine suit of clothes. [*Aside.*]

Cord. Do you observe that, signior? There's another humour has now crack'd the shell.

Mit. What! he is enamoured of the fashion, is he?

Cord. O, you forestall the jest.

Sog. When saw you my niece?

Fung. Marry, yesternight I supped there.—That kind of boot does very rare, too.

The above ideas, followed by Fungoso's: "I was never so pleased with a fashion, days of my life"; "such a hose"; "an I could compass it 'twere rare," are all in the vein of the Malvolio conspiracy, though the next page returns again to what looks very like another satire upon the Viola-Olivia motive. This, by Fastidious:

When I am at court they do share me among them; happy is he can enjoy me most private. I do wish myself sometime an ubiquitary for their love, in good faith—

seems to be a gibe at the cross-competition for favours, between Orsino and the two ladies; while the following passage evidently derives straight from the countess, and includes the ring incident with Viola. The clown, moreover, it will be remembered, calls his mistress "Madonna" (*Twelfth Night*, I, 5):

Punt. Then you must of necessity know our court star there, that planet of wit, madona Saviolina?

Fast. O Lord, sir, my mistress.

Punt. Is she your mistress?

Fast. Faith, here be some slight favours of hers, sir, that do speak it, she is; as this scarf, sir, or this ribbon in my ear, or so; this feather grew in her sweet fan sometimes, though now it be my poor fortune to wear it, as you see, sir, slight, slight, a foolish toy.

Punt. Well, she is the lady of a most exalted and ingenious spirit.

Fast. Did you ever hear any woman speak like her? or, enriched with a more plentiful discourse?

Throughout this duologue the two plays run side by side. Puntarvolo's

Come, regard not a jester. It is in the power of my purse to make him speak well or ill of me,

is doubled in Orsino's duologue with Feste (*Twelfth Night*, V, 1) wherein occurs the duke's line:

You can fool no more money out of me at this throw.

Further,

The most harmonious and musical strain of wit that ever tempted a true ear

still aims, no doubt, at the lyrical passages of *Twelfth Night*; and Fastidious's

As I am an honest man, would I might never stir

is the phraseology of Sir Andrew, with his "As I am true knight," and "Would I might never draw sword again."

Now, if all these pages be, as, in my judgment, they unquestionably are, a good-humoured satire, by Jonson, upon *Twelfth Night*, the references to Greene, who, some six years before, had expressed

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anger at Shakespeare's borrowings, seems to imply that, in Jonson's opinion, Shakespeare, when writing the parts of Viola, or Olivia, or both, had lifted ideas, or lines, from the earlier dramatists' plays; and it is, unhappily, quite characteristic of Jonson—intellectual honesty not being his forte¹—that, while assiduously borrowing himself, he should charge others with that same offence.

This first scene of Act II, is a very long one; and Mitis's objection, made to Cordatus, at the close, that "it hung in the hand," answered by Cordatus with:

I see not where he could have insisted less, and to have made the humours perspicuous enough—

is, apparently, an attempt by Jonson to vindicate his own fault, of perpetual iteration. Jonson's scenes are frequently too long; and, as we shall see, more than once, in subsequent chapters,² he will borrow from the same passage, and repeat the same idea, again and again, under various forms, never knowing when he has said enough, and lacking, almost completely, the happy faculty of selection, which is one of the marks of a true artist, and which, with occasional lapses, is conspicuously apparent in Shakespeare's best work.

¹"Of all stiles he loved most to be named honest, and hath of that ane hundredth letters so naming him."—(*Conversations*, R. F. Patterson's edn., p. 252.)

²He does so frequently in *The Silent Woman*, and also in *Sejanus*.

CHAPTER V

"EVERY MAN OUT OF HIS HUMOUR" AND "TWELFTH NIGHT"—(continued)

Continues the parallels between *Every Man Out of His Humour* and *Twelfth Night*; discusses the mockery of Sogliardo's coat-of-arms, in the former play, and the curious references, by Mitis, to *Twelfth Night*.

WE come now to the second scene of the second act, when the entry of Deliro, the amorous-uxorious knight, of an Orsino species, accompanied by Macilente and Fido, "with flowers and perfumes," followed by strewing and censuring, at once prepares us for the languorous, sensuous episodes, in which—apart from the revellers—the first scenes of *Twelfth Night* are played. Among these moves Macilente, speaking, it seems, the mind of Jonson himself, cursing the Fates, that keep him poor:

—I see no reason why that dog call'd Chance
Should fawn upon this fellow more than me—

and mocking Olivia, and her relations with the duke. Deliro, the doting husband, delivers himself of a speech:

No, that is sure as death,
No man alive. I do not say, is not,
But cannot possibly be worth her kindness

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.

As though this dull gross tongue of mine could utter
The rare, the true, the pure, the infinite rights,
That sit, as high as I can look, within her;

thus parodying, in rhythm, as well as in words, the Duke's apostrophe to Olivia (*Twelfth Night*, I, 1):

O! she that hath a heart of that fine frame, *etc.*

and mocked at by the matter-of-fact Macilente, in his comment:

This is such dotage as was never heard.

For—of all the Shakespearean characteristics that at once bewilder and exasperate Jonson—none, excepting literary thefts, "draws" him more than do his friend's idealizations of womanhood. The author of *Every Man Out of His Humour* has no spark of chivalry in his composition: he is no believer either in the virtue or the ability of woman; and frequently, throughout this book, we shall find him vigorously, and, no doubt, quite sincerely, attacking Shakespeare, as an incurably romantic feminist, lamentably blinded by pretty faces and a false idealism, to the sober facts of contemporary womanhood.¹

The scene that we are discussing continues, meanwhile, in a similar vein; and Macilente's last

¹Dr. Ward has pointed out that the Elizabethan age was more corrupt than that of the Restoration. Adultery was as common as hand-shaking; but Jonson, drawing the middle class, perhaps exaggerates, to please his aristocratic friends.

speech to Deliro,¹ before the entrance of Fallace, may be taken, I think, as a counter-blast to Orsino's speeches to Viola, concerning women, beginning:

Too old, by heaven. Let still the woman take
An elder than herself;

and,

There is no woman's side
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart—

Jonson's vagrant, and somewhat slavish, fancy, having, by this time, passed on to *Twelfth Night*, II, 4, from which, as we have seen, he already borrowed freely, for a version of the "What-kind-of-woman-is't?" dialogue. I may as well here forewarn the reader, that Jonson, who, with all his rich ability, remains poor in imagination, is going to do the same sort of thing again, with *Julius Caesar*, in *Sejanus*, and with *Twelfth Night*, once more, in *The Silent Woman*.

The remainder of this scene, up to the entrance of Fungoso, continues to hover between I, 1, and II, 4, of *Twelfth Night*. These lines by Deliro:

Now this walk
Have I, before she knows it, thus perfumed
With herbs and flowers; and laid in divers places,

¹The passage runs thus:

You are too amorous, too obsequious,
And make her too assured she may command you.
When women doubt most of their husband's loves,
They are most loving. Husbands must take heed
They have no gluts of kindness to their wives,
But use them like their horses. . . .
Be kind not amorous.

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As 'twere on altars consecrate to her,
Perfumed gloves, and delicate chains of amber,
To keep the air in awe of her sweet nostrils—

are blossoms culled from

a bank of violets

Stealing and giving odour,

and from the beds of flowers, wherein "love-thoughts lie rich."

Deliro's wife, Fallace, immediately enters, and, as a good anti-Shakespearean should do, protests vigorously against this undue censuring of her apartments:

All my rooms altered, and but one poor walk
That I delighted in, and that is made
So fulsome with perfumes, that I am fear'd
My brain doth sweat so, I have caught the plague—

this last line—though the idea is distorted—being taken, I suspect, from Olivia's (I, 4):

Unless the master were the man. How now!
Even so quickly may one catch the plague.

And so it goes on; Jonson, ever unconscious that he has said enough; iterating his flower-perfume motive; and awakening a *Twelfth Night* recollection with every second line; as when Fallace complains:

And now my walk and all,
You smoke me from, as if I were a fox,
And long, belike, to drive me quite away.
Well, walk you there, and I'll walk where I list—

reminding us at once of Valentine's report upon Olivia (*Twelfth Night*, I, 1):

The element itself, till seven years heat,
 Shall not behold her face at ample view;
 But, like a cloistress, will she veiled walk,
 And water once a day her chamber round
 With eye-offending brine.

Deliro's exclamation:

What shall I do? O, I shall never please her—
 echoes, of course, the failure of the duke's suit;
 and Macilente's reply:

Out on thee, dotard! what star ruled his birth,
 That brought him such a Star? blind fortune still
 Bestows her gifts on such as cannot use them—

is another Jonsonian protest against the malignancy
 of Fate, and, incidentally, I think, against Shake-
 speare's belief in the potential failure of any man
 to break through any woman's defences. The
 husband's lines, that follow:

Del. Away with 'em; would I had broke a joint
 When I devised this, that should so dislike her.
 Away! bear all away! [*Exit FIDO with flowers, etc.*]

is, perhaps, Jonson's version of "Come away,
 Death!" blended with an inversion of the Duke's:

Away before me to sweet beds of flowers;
 and Fallace's answer to the above:

O this man,
 How cunningly he can conceal himself—
 hints, no doubt, at Viola's concealed sex, while her
 next speech:

Sweet heart O better still
 And asking, why? wherefore? and looking strangely

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As if he were as white as innocence.

Alas! you're simple, you; you cannot change,
Look pale at pleasure, and then red with wonder;
No no, not you, 'tis pity o' your naturals—

we are already familiar with, in Viola's lyrical outbreak:

'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand put on.

As further proof of Jonson's reliance upon his original, did not Shakespeare's use of the word "hand" probably suggest the glove incident—"a pair of gloves that somewhat liked me"—which he has here slipped into his text?

With the entry of Fungoso, "Apparelled like Fastidious Brisk," the more lyrical themes of Shakespeare's play, such as melancholy and patience, at once come chiming through the talk. Fungoso's testimonial to his suit—of clothes, this time—that it is "good enough to ride in," repeats Sir Toby's, "good enough to drink in"; and the turn of the dialogue upon fashion, hints at the plot against Malvolio, just as Fallace's, "Come, when will you pay me again now?" does at Antonio's loan to Sebastian. As for the other parallels upon this page (92), the sources of the two following excerpts are plain: "How dost thou, sweet lady?" and "noble masculine and feminine";—all this passage being continuously interesting, as showing how Jonson deliberately distorts his borrowed material. Here, too, is another extraordinary jumble of *Twelfth Night* motives, the first clause of the speech, from which I am about

to quote, being from *Twelfth Night*, III, 2, when Sir Andrew complains:

Marry, I saw your niece do more favours to the count's serving man than ever she bestowed upon me; I saw't in the orchard.

Fastidious's corresponding speech, abridged, runs as follows:

There was a countess gave me her hand to kiss to-day, i' the presence. . . . O! I have been graced by them beyond all aim of affection: this is her garter my dagger hangs in: and they do so commend and approve my apparel, with my judicious wearing of it, it's above wonder.

Page 94, previous to the re-entry of Fungoso, with his tailor, gives us Jonson's version of Sir Andrew's " 'Odours,' 'pregnant,' and 'vouchsafed'! I'll get 'em all three all ready" (*Twelfth Night*, III, 1) condensed to the following:

Fal. Good lord, how you are perfumed in your terms and all;

and Fallace's next speech is almost pure Olivia:

Fal. Ay, ay, let thy words ever sound in mine ears, and thy graces disperse contentment through all my senses. O! how happy is that lady above other ladies, that enjoys so absolute a gentleman to her servant. A countess gives him her hand to kiss, ah foolish countess, he's a man worthy, if a woman may speak of a man's worth, to kiss the lips of an empress.

Here we come to another curious, and interesting, episode, in this intriguing play, namely, a forewarning, to the audience, of the author's intention to make, in the next act, a mock at Shake-

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speare's application, in the character of "Sogliardo," to the College of Heralds, for a coat-of-arms, which was granted to him in 1598, through the influence of Southampton, aided by Essex, who was then chief of the College. The first direct reference to this matter is by Fungoso:

If anybody ask for mine uncle Sogliardo, they shall have him at the Herald's office yonder, by Paul's.

whereupon Mitis and Cordatus comment, as follows, upon what has gone before.

Mit. Well, I doubt, this last scene will endure some grievous torture.

Cor. How? you fear 'twill be racked by some hard construction?

Mit. Do not you?

Cor. No, in good faith; unless mine eyes could light me beyond sense. I see no reason why this should be more liable to the rack than the rest: you'll say, perhaps, the city will not take it well that the merchant is made here to doat so perfectly upon his wife; and she again to be so *Fastidiously* affected as she is.

Mit. You have uttered my thought, sir, indeed.

Cor. Well, by that proportion, the court might as well take offence at him we call the courtier, and with much more pretext by how much more the place transcends, and goes before in dignity and virtue: but can you imagine that any true or noble spirit in court . . . will make any exception at the opening of such an empty trunk as this Brisk is? or think his own worth impeached by beholding his motley inside?

Mit. No, sir, I do not.

Cor. No more, assure you, will any grave, wise citizen, or modest matron, take the object of this folly in Deliro and his wife; but rather apply it as the foil to their own virtues. For that were to affirm, that a man writing of

Nero, should mean all emperors; . . . or in our Sordido all farmers . . . than which nothing can be uttered more malicious or absurd. Indeed there are a sort of these narrow-eyed decypherers, I confess, that will extort strange and abstruse meanings out of any subject, be it never so conspicuous and innocently delivered. But to such, where'er they sit concealed, let them know, the author defies them and their writing tables; and hopes no sound or safe judgment will infect itself with their contagious comments, who, indeed, come here only to pervert and poison the sense of what they hear, and for nought else.

Now here we have a characteristic, and, I fear, somewhat disingenuous piece of Jonsonian special pleading. Upon the face of the text, the pair are discussing the possible wrath of certain citizens of London, over his satire upon an uxorious merchant, and the author is evidently demanding from his audience the same openness and singleness of mind, which he claims also for himself; yet I cannot easily escape the conclusion, that, when he writes of "these narrow-eyed decypherers that will extort strange and abstruse meanings out of any subjects, be it never so conspicuous and innocently delivered," he is, in part at least, endeavouring to forestall resentment at the apparent attack upon Shakespeare, which is to come with the opening scene of the next act; while, at the same time, he attempts to disclaim his large debt to Shakespeare, for the text and fabric of his play. Some ten years later, in 1609, in a second prologue to *The Silent Woman*, based also, as we shall see, upon *Twelfth Night* he again protests, in advance, against the activities of cunning "decipherers":

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If any yet will, with particular sleight
Of application, wrest what he doth write;
And that he meant, or him, or her, will say.
They make a libel, which he made a play.

Yet, immediately upon this last line of disclaimer, with the opening line of *The Silent Woman*, there is a manifest borrowing from the opening line of *Twelfth Night*! These may sound harsh sayings; but I see no way successfully to challenge their truth.

Act three, of *Every Man Out of His Humour*, opens with dialogue between Orange, Shift, and Clove, of which trio the latter pair—"mere strangers to the whole scope of our play"—as Cordatus describes them, are kin to Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, in their common inclination to "sup together and laugh, and be fat with these good wenches, ha!" also Orange's propensity, to "laugh at a jest for company with a most plausible and extemporal grace; and some hours after in private ask you what it was" is exactly the kind of thing that one can imagine Sir Andrew doing. The other parallels, hereabouts, however, are unimportant, until the dialogue between Fastidious, Deliro, and Macilente renews the Olivia-Viola-Orsino motive, with:

Fast. I will bring you tomorrow by this time, into the presence of the most divine and acute lady in court; you shall see sweet silent rhetoric, and dumb eloquence speaking in her eye, but when she speaks herself, such an anatomy of wit, so sinewised and arterised, that 'tis the goodliest model of pleasure that ever was to behold. Oh she strikes the world into admiration of her; O, O, O! I cannot express them, believe me.

Maci. O, your only admiration is your silence, sir.

Whereupon follows a passage that, by its pictorially descriptive quality, suggests to me, that Jonson, when he wrote it, had already seen *Twelfth Night* played, and was describing one of the characters from life.

Punt [*reading the bill*]. If there be any lady or gentleman of good carriage that is desirous to entertain to her private uses a young, straight, and upright gentleman, of the age of five or six and twenty at the most; who can serve in the nature of a gentleman-usher, and hath little legs of purpose, and a black satin suit of his own, to go before her in,"—and so forth.

That passage has the authentic ring of something taken *sur le vif*. The same bill, by the way, after Carlo's ejaculation, "Here's a fine slave," seems to aim at Viola and Sebastian, with the "lost brother" motive:

If this city, or the suburbs of the same, do afford any young gent of the first, second, or third head, more or less, whose friends are but lately deceased, . . .

being, perhaps, borrowed from *Twelfth Night*, III, 3, Antonio's

In the south suburbs at the Elephant
Is best to lodge;

while the "friend lately deceased" is Sebastian himself, whom until towards the close of the play, Viola supposes to be drowned. Jonson carefully avoids any direct reference to the Elephant; but Puntarvolo, a few lines lower down, refers to "no better place than the Mitre." Immediately, with the entrance of Sogliardo, the baiting of Malvolio

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theme is reintroduced, with "prithee lets talk fustian a little, and gull them," by Clove and Orange, who here again stand for Sir Toby and his fellows. Clove's high-falutin rigmarole:

Now, sir, whereas the ingenuity of the time and the soul's synderisis are but the embrions in nature, added to the panch of Esquiline, and the inter-vallum of the zodiac, besides the ecliptic line being optic, and not mental. . . . You conceive me, sir?

Orange. O lord, sir.

Clove. Then coming to the pretty animal, as reason long since is fled to animals, you know, or indeed for the more modelising or enamelling, or rather diamondising of your subject, you shall perceive the hypothesis, or galaxia (whereof the meteors long since had their initial inceptions and notions) to be merely Pythagorical, mathematical, and aristocratical—

I suppose to be the origin of Sir Andrew's

Pigrogromitus of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Phœbus—(*Twelfth Night*, II, 3.)

as it is also of Malvolio's catechizing, by Sir Topaz:

What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?
and of the tormented steward's answer:

That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

Sogliardo's phrase, that follows:

Nay, I will have him, I am resolute for that. By this parchment, gentlemen, I have been so toiled among the harrots yonder, you will not believe! they do speak in he strangest language—

and this also:

Car. But have you arms, have you arms?

Sogl. I'faith, I thank them; I can write myself gentleman now; here's my patent, it cost me thirty pound, by this breath—

is still in the Malvolio vein, though the direct satire here is aimed, I suspect, not at one of Shakespeare's characters, but at the dramatist himself, and his newly acquired coat-of-arms, "ramping to gentility," "the most vile, foolish, absurd, palpable, and ridiculous escutcheon that ever this eye survived."

This is a part of the passage.

Sog. [*reads*] On a chief argent a boar's head proper, between two ann'lets sable.

Car. 'Slud, it's a hog's cheek and puddings in a pewter field, this.

Sogl. How like you them, signior?

Punt. Let the word be, *Not without mustard*. Your crest is very rare, sir.

Car. A frying pan to the crest, had had no fellow.

All this, surely, can have but one meaning. "Not without mustard" is a double gibe, first at the motto upon Shakespeare's actual coat-of-arms, "Non sans droit," and secondly, perhaps, at a certain family connection with butcher's meat, Carlo's expression, "had no fellow,"¹ coming so near to the word "mustard" in the text, indicates, I think, that Jonson deliberately made the allusion quite clear to his audience, by including Bottom's reference to "that same cowardly giant-like ox-

¹*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, 1, and IV, 1.

beef," of which he spoke to Fairy Mustardseed, and to "good hay, sweet hay" that "hath no fellow."

"Hogs' cheeks and puddings in a pewter field," is, of course, another shaft aimed at the same mark; and the whole makes up an attack, which, if, as I venture to doubt, it was actually inserted in the version of the play put on, probably at the newly erected Globe Theatre, in 1600, must have strained Shakespeare's tolerance. Clouded though his fortunes were, at this time, through his attachment to the Essex party, it is, surely, improbable that an attack so bitter and personal would have been permitted, even in those days, at a theatre wherein Jonson's friend and rival undoubtedly exercised influence. The passage is in the quarto; but it may well have been inserted specially for the printer. Mr. Arthur Acheson, in his *Sonnet Story*, has not perceived that *Every Man Out of His Humour* is an imitation of, and satire upon, *Twelfth Night*; but he is quite alive to the attacks upon Shakespeare in the prologue to *Every Man In His Humour* and in the coat-of-arms allusions, in *Every Man Out of His Humour*—his answer to the argument urging the improbability of the Lord Chamberlain's company accepting and performing plays attacking other plays, which they owned—and, at the same time satirizing and caricaturing one of their leading members—being, that Jonson had recovered, by revision, the ownership of both plays, that during the later stages of the theatrical quarrel they were acted, for some time, by a rival company, and that the allusions to Shakespeare were inserted "at a later period of revision, when Jonson had gone over to the enemy."

With this view, so far as it goes, I agree; but Mr. Acheson does not here take account of the satire of *Twelfth Night* that is inherent in the play, from beginning to end—a fact of which—though it has escaped the commentators—Shakespeare's contemporaries, and those responsible for running the Globe Theatre, must, surely, have been aware. My own explanation would be, that neither the Globe management, nor Shakespeare himself, was squeamish enough to resent, on principle, attacks upon their own plays, provided that they saw and found therein good advertisement, and handsome profit. Concerning the more keenly barbed and bitter personal attacks, however, one supposes that there would be less tolerance shown.

Every Man Out of His Humour, meanwhile, continues in the same vein of undeviating adherence to its model. Carlo's advice to Sogliardo:

Nay, look you, sir, now you are a gentleman, you must carry a more exalted presence, change your mood and habit to a more austere form; be exceeding proud, stand upon your gentility, and scorn every man; speak nothing humbly, never discourse under a nobleman—

being a paraphrase of the forged letter to Malvolio (*Twelfth Night*, II, 5), in which the countess, as her steward supposes, is urged, by his mistress, to

Cast thy humble slough and appear fresh. Be opposite with kinsmen, surly with servants; let thy tongue tang arguments of state.

The same speaker's further exhortation to Sogliardo, a few lines lower down, to "wish them hanged upon the turn," is used by Malvolio to his

tormentors—"Go hang yourselves all" (*Twelfth Night* II, 4)—and the passage that follows Carlo's re-entry (p. 101), is palpably derived from the letter scene, in *Twelfth Night*, wherein Maria tells her companions that Malvolio is coming down the walk, "practising behaviour to his own shadow"—a phrase which Jonson transmutes into "expostulating with his rapier" or, as the stage direction puts it, "using action to his rapier." That Jonson has already borrowed from the same episode, in the first scene of the first act, with Sordido standing for Malvolio, and the almanac replacing the letter, will surprise no one who has followed our enquiry thus far.

Some fifty lines from the end of this first scene of act three, the dialogue resounds with more *Twelfth Night* echoes, such as Shift's; "I do scorn to serve any man," paralleled by, "If not, let me see thee a servant still," and the same individual's, "But in the nature of a fellow," deriving, obviously, from "Not after my degree (*Twelfth Night*, III, 4) but fellow." Carlo's "Smile at it, make two or three faces," is, of course, more Malvolio; but it is not until the close of the scene that we come upon a really interesting bit of dialogue, the close relation of which to *Twelfth Night* has long ago been pointed out.¹

¹H. H. Furness (e.g.) in his Variorum Edition of *Twelfth Night*, while admitting that a reference to *Twelfth Night* is not chronologically impossible, has "no faith whatever in the supposition that Jonson here aimed such petty criticism at a play which not only had authority so irreproachably classic as Plautus and Menander for its cross-wooing, but was also written by one whom he "loved . . . this side of idolatry". Those quoted words, however, were written by Jonson, in *Discoveries*, after Shakespeare's death, when there was no longer professional rivalry between the pair.

Mit. I travail with another objection, signior, which I fear will be enforced against the author, ere I can be deliver'd of it.

Cor. What's that, sir?

Mit. That the argument of this comedy might have been of some other nature, as of a duke to be in love with a countess, and that countess, to be in love with the duke's son, and the son to love the lady's waiting-maid; some such cross-wooing, with a clown to their servingman, better than to be thus near, and familiarly allied to the time.

Cor. You say well, but I would fain hear one of these autumn-judgments define once, *Quid sit comoedia?* if he cannot, let him content himself with Cicero's definition, till he have strength to propose to himself a better, who would have a comedy to be *imitatio vitae, speculum consuetudinis, imago veritatis*; a thing throughout pleasant and ridiculous, and accommodated to the correction of manners: if the maker have fail'd in any particle of this, they may worthily tax him; but if not, why be you, that are for them, silent, as I will be for him; and give way to the actors.

Now Mitis's second speech, it will have been observed, is substantially a recital of the plot of *Twelfth Night*, the very play that Jonson has been filching from consistently, for more than two acts of his comedy, and will continue to filch from to the end. At once, therefore, the question suggests itself: Why did Jonson do this?

The answer is not easily found. When first I came across the passage, I surmised that Shakespeare was borrowing from Jonson, or else that Mr. William Poel was right, when he suggested to me that the lines might have been inserted, as a kind of advertisement to the audience, that a new

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play, with some such plot as that outlined, might be expected soon at the Globe. Further investigation, however, satisfied me—and I hope I have done as much for my readers—that Jonson, and not Shakespeare, was the borrower; and I am therefore driven to conclude, that this somewhat baffling passage was perhaps a deliberate, and if so, audacious attempt, on Jonson's part, to conceal his tracks, and to enable him to counter any charge of plagiarism from Shakespeare's play, by pointing out that he would hardly thus call attention to a comedy from which he was consciously borrowing. Jonson, apparently, was always as eager to disclaim plagiarisms as he was ready to indulge in them, and we have already seen him, in Act III, protesting, through his moderator, Cordatus, against "those narrow-eyed decyphers that will abstract strange and abstruse meanings" from innocent, and much maligned, authors, like himself.¹

Let me now continue the record of borrowings, which I propose to follow, right to the conclusion of the play, lest critics be inclined, as I suspect that some may, to set down these parallels to mere

¹The following passage from Act V of *Cynthia's Revels*—in which Crites stands for Jonson himself—affords a very interesting example of the zest with which he undertook this sort of deliberate imitation. The lines, though not aimed at *Twelfth Night*, apply perfectly to the way in which that play is dealt with in *Every Man Out of His Humour*.

Mercury. Now Crites, strike home.

Crites. You shall see me undo the assured swaggerer with a trick instantly. I will play all his own play before him; court the wench in his garb, in his phrase, with his face; leave him not so much as a look, an eye, a stalk, or an imperfect oath to express himself by, after me.

This chapter, and the preceding one, show how completely Jonson "played all his own play before him."

coincidence—the natural result of two contemporary dramatists, handling a similar topic, at about the same time.¹

Scene two of the third act, to which we have now come, continues the "Malvolio" motive, in the character of "Sordido," with such phrases as "These star-monger knaves"; "à vostre service"; Sordido's letter from his son;

Let me not want that which is fit for the setting up of our name in the honourable volume of gentility;

and so forth, followed by the same individual's speech (p. 107), against the Rustics, which might have been spoken by Malvolio to his tormentors,

What curses breathe these men! how have my deeds
Made my looks differ from another man's,
That they should thus detest and loathe my life!
Out on my wretched humour!

After the re-entry of Fastidious, however, and excepting Cinedo's line,

Or if you had but your long stockings on,

we are spared Malvolio, for a time, the next character from *Twelfth Night* aimed at—by Fastidious—being Maria, in the person of Saviolina, who, on an earlier occasion, has stood for Olivia.

Fast. O, your wits of Italy are nothing comparable to her: her brain's a very quiver of jests and she does dart them abroad with that sweet, loose, and judicial aim, that you would—here she comes, sir.

¹The "coincidence" theory, which has more than once been advanced to me, would, in my judgment, if proved true, be an explanation far more surprising than the natural, and simple one—that one dramatist borrowed from the other.

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and Macilente continues the same theme, with:

I like such tempers well, as stand before their mistresses
with fear and trembling; and before their Maker, like
impudent mountains!

The remainder of the scene is packed with similarly borrowed phrases, such as "the soul of music"; "the viol de gamba"; and, "I love not the breath of a woodcock's head," the last of which brings us back to Malvolio, and dispossession of "the soul of a woodcock." Then comes a closing passage, based upon Malvolio's speech to Olivia (*Twelfth Night*, I, 5)

I protest, I take these wise men, that crow so at these set
kind of fools, no better than the fools' zanies—

though—probably with a view to covering his tracks—Jonson postpones use of the word zanies, until after Macilente's entry, in the first scene of the fourth act, when the same character continues the now outworn steward theme, in the following lines.

Maci. Alas, the poor fantastic he's scarce known
To any lady there, and those that know him. . .
Deride and play upon his amorous humours,
Though he but apishly doth imitate
The gallant'st courtiers, kissing ladies' pumps. .
And therefore they despise him. For indeed
He's like the *zany* to a tumbler,
That tries tricks after him, to make men laugh.

Finally, so far as the third act is concerned, Fastidious' line:

Heart of a gentleman, to neglect me afore the presence
thus—

is probably derived from Sir Andrew's whine—which Jonson has used before in this play—

Marry, I saw your niece do more favours to the count's serving man than ever she bestowed upon me.

which incident, with our arrival at Act IV, and the tossing about, by the characters, of the word "melancholy"—four times repeated, in seven lines—brings us back to Viola, and her "duel" with Sir Andrew.

Fung. By this hand, I could fight with all my heart, methinks,

Fal. Nay, good brother, be not resolute.

Fung. I sent him a letter, and he writes me no answer neither,

A little farther on, before the entry of Macilente, the following passage foreshadows the kitchen scene in *Twelfth Night*, which Jonson will use more fully, later on.

Del. [*coming forward*]. Anger thee, sweet wife! why, did'st thou not send for musicians at supper last night thyself?

Fal. To supper, sir, now come up to supper, I beseech you, as though there were no difference between supper time, when folks should be merry, and this time when they should be melancholy.

Other echoes, in the same scene, are:

Fal. O monster of men, can the earth bear such an envious caitiff?

and

Del. Let's follow and appease her;

which suggests Duke Orsino's command:

Pursue him and entreat him to a peace.

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The brief second scene, of this fourth act, is, nevertheless, long enough for Jonson to work in the Malvolio theme, once more, with such phrases as, "For the love of gentry," which is close to Maria's, "For the love of mockery"; "How my flesh rises at him"—which might have been spoken by one of the listeners in the garden—and "He cannot choose but take it extraordinarily from me; and commend me to him. . . ."

The short third scene is original, and the long fourth one continues to be so, until after the entry of Macilente, when that character, with his "Your wife is no proper woman," recalls Viola again, and, in his next speech—

Good, sir! now horn upon horn pursue thee, thou blind
egregious dotard—

makes use of sound and rhythm suspiciously close to that of Feste to Orsino

Now the melancholy god protect thee; . . . for thy mind is
a very opal.—(*Twelfth Night*, II, 4.)

After the entrances of Sogliardo and Shift, we find two more borrowed remarks, spoken by the former, and originating, I think, from Sir Toby; "As resolute a piece of flesh as any in the world," paralleled by "As witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria," and "I think him the tallest man living," which echoes "As tall a man as any's in Illyria." Fastidious's reference, in the same scene, to "a bevy of ladies," recalls Olivia's court, and the Lady Collegiates—into which Jonson will transform that court in *The Silent Woman*—while Carlo's words, a few lines lower down:

He knows some notorious jest by this gull—

are from Malvolio's protest (*Twelfth Night*, V, 1):

And made the most notorious geck and gull
That e'er invention played on.

The scene concludes with a duel between Fastidious and Signior Luculentio, strongly reminiscent of that between Andrew and Viola—"begun with as much resolution, maintained with as much prowess," and, like the more famous encounter, ending "without perdition of souls."

Hereabouts I find myself sighing for a gleam or two of really native ingenuity upon Jonson's part ; but in vain. Not merely does he continue monotonously to borrow from the same play; but he must persist in pirating the same episodes, again and again. Scene five, of this fourth act, is based, once more, upon the duologues between Andrew and Toby, in *Twelfth Night*, I, 3, the following, concerning Andrew's head of hair—

Sir. A. But it becomes me well enough, does't not?

Sir T. Excellent, it hangs like flax on a distaff.

being fitted thus to Fungoso's hat.

Fung. How does it become me, well?

Tail. Excellent, sir, as ever you had any hat in your life.

Further, Fungoso's "I think I have as good a body in clothes as another," also descends from Sir Andrew—

I think I have the back trick simply as strong as any man
in Illyria.

The scene contains other parallels, which—if he

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care to undertake it—I, having had enough, will leave to the reader's own investigation.

The sixth, and last, scene of this fourth act, in which Carlo's announcement, that he is persuading Sogliardo to turn courtier, provokes Fastidious to a rhapsody upon court life—seems to me to be a deliberate travesty of the *Twelfth Night* spirit, in which—as in every successful burlesque—the fine qualities of the original are felt, even while they are being laughed at. Jonson, in fact, here got nearer to the truth than he supposed. This is the speech:

Fast. O, the most celestial, and full of wonder and delight that can be imagined, signior, beyond thought and apprehension of pleasure! A man lives there in that divine rapture, that he will think himself in the ninth heaven for the time, and lose all sense of mortality whatsoever, when he shall behold such glorious and almost immortal beauties; hear such angelical and harmonious voices, discourse with such flowing and ambrosial spirits, whose wits are as sudden as lightning, and humorous as nectar; oh, it makes a man all quintessence and flame, and lifts him up, in a moment, to the very crystal crown of the sky, where, hovering in the strength of his imagination, he shall behold all the delights of the Hesperides, the Insulae Fortunatae, Adonis' Gardens, Temple, or what else, confined within the amplest verge of poesy, to be mere umbrae, and imperfect figures, conferred with the most essential felicity of your court.

Maci. Well, this encomium was not extemporal, it came too perfectly off.

Few, I think, will deny that, while deliberately exaggerated, it reproduces, with a certain felicity, the peculiarly languorous-lyrical atmosphere of

Orsino's court, and the wistful and fantastic beauties, that pervade the loveliest comedy in our, or any other, tongue.

The first scene of the fifth act, to which we now pass, is comparatively original, with the exception of a passage or two, such as this, between Macilente and Sogliardo, that aims again at Malvolio and Olivia.

Maci. Come one, signior, now prepare to court this all witted lady, most naturally, and like yourself.

Sogl. Faith, an you say the word, I'll begin to her in tobacco.

Maci. O, fie on't no; you shall begin with, "How does my sweet lady?" or "Why are you so melancholy, madam?" though she be very merry, it's all one. Be sure to kiss your hand often enough; pray for her health and tell her, how more than most fair she is.

The same may be said of Sogliardo's speech to Saviolina (p. 132):

Sog. How does my sweet lady? Hot and moist? Beautiful and lusty? ha!

Sav. Beautiful an it please you, sir, but not lusty.

In scene three of this fifth act, excepting Sogliardo's

Its marle he stabs you not, he hath stabbed forty, for forty times less matter,

and so forth, which repeats the prowess in duelling ascribed by Sir Toby and his fellows to Viola, as Sir Andrew's opposite, and to Sir Andrew as Viola's—"souls and bodies hath he divorced three," etc.—there is nothing remarkable to notice; but in the fourth scene, Jonson, who, hitherto, has left the kitchen revels in *Twelfth Night* com-

paratively unused, thinks it is time to fill out his act with a travesty of the best written and best known; scene of boisterous comedy, in all the literature of our stage. Jonson's setting for it is a room at the Mitre, where Carlo Buffone sits drinking alone, and atoning for lack of human companionship by taking up the cups, "drinking with one and pledging with the other," and speaking for each alternately.

Car. [*drinks*]. Ay, marry, sir, here's purity; O, George—I could bite off his nose for this now, sweet rogue, he has drawn nectar, the very soul of the grape! I'll wash my temples with some on't presently, and drink some half a score draughts; twill heat the brain, kindle my imagination, I shall talk nothing but crackers and fire-works tonight. So, sir! please you to be here, sir, and I here; so.

[Sets the two cups asunder, drinks with the one and pledges with the other, speaking for each of the cups and drinking alternately.]

Cor. This is worth the observation, signior.

Car. 1 *Cup.* Now, sir, here's to you; and I present you with so much of my love.

2 *Cup.* I take it kindly from you, sir [*drinks*], and will return you the like proportion; but withal, sir; remembering the merry night we had at the countess's, you know where, sir.

1 *Cup.* By heaven, you put me in mind now of a very necessary office, which I will propose in your pledge, sir; the health of that honourable countess, and the sweet lady that sat by her, sir.

Here the atmosphere of the Shakespearean scenes, that "merry night we had at the countess's, you know where," and the echo of Sir Toby's, "I'll drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat," leaves no doubt at all as to Jonson's

source; while the following bit of dialogue, between Mitis and Cordatus—

Mit. Whom should he personate in this, Signior?

Cor. Faith, I know not, sir—

rather suggests that, in Carlo, Jonson is satirizing, under cover, some individual, probably Shakespeare himself, since he makes Carlo responsible for the whole scene, as Shakespeare was for the kitchen episodes of *Twelfth Night*.

The passage continues thus:

2 *Cup.* If it were the basest filth, or mud that runs in the channel, I am bound to pledge it respectively, sir [*drinks*]. And now, sir, here is a replenish'd bowl, which I will reciprocally turn upon you, to the health of the Count Frugale.

1 *Cup.* The count Frugale's health, sir? I'll pledge it on my knees, by this light. [*Kneels.*]

2 *Cup.* Will you, sir? I'll drink it on my knees then, by the light.

Mit. Why, this is strange.

Cor. Have you heard a better drunken dialogue?

2 *Cup.* Nay, do me right, sir.

1 *Cup.* So I do, in faith.

2 *Cup.* Good faith, you do not; mine was fuller.

1 *Cup.* Why, believe me, it was not.

2 *Cup.* Believe me, it was; and you do lie

1 *Cup.* Lie, sir!

2 *Cup.* Aye, sir.

1 *Cup.* 'Swounds, you rascal!

2 *Cup.* O, come, stab if you have a mind to it.

1 *Cup.* Stab! dost thou think I dare not?

Car. [*speaks in his own person*]. Nay, I beseech you, gentlemen, what means this? nay, look, for shame respect your reputations.

[*Overturns wine, pot, cups, and all.*]

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Enter MACILENTE.

Maci. Why, how now, Carlo! what humour's this?

The reader, no doubt, will have observed that much of this dialogue is lifted, with little change, from the kitchen-scene, a part of which runs thus:

Sir To. But I will never die!

Clown. Sir Toby, there you lie.

Mal. This is much credit to you.

Sir To. "Shall I bid him go?"

Feste. "What an if you do?"

Sir To. "Shall I bid him go and spare not?"

Feste. O, no, no, no, no, you dare not.

Sir To. Out o' tune, sir! ye lie. Art any more than a steward?

There is, I feel certain, more hereabouts in Jonson's play than at once meets the eye; and I think it probable that Cordatus's, "Have you heard a better drunken dialogue?" and Carlo's, "Nay look, for shame, respect your reputations," are references to the instant popularity of *Twelfth Night*, and especially, perhaps, of its drunken scene, upon the Elizabethan stage.

Excepting a few lines, such as this, by Macilente:

Especially the knight; spare no sulphurous jest that may come out of that sweaty forge of thine,

which patently descends from Sir Toby, the remainder of the scene is comparatively free from parallels, until we come to:

Punt. Down I say [*CARLO lies down*].—Who's there?

[*Knocking within.*]

Cons. [*within*]. Here's the constable, open the doors.

Carl. Good Macilente.

Punt. Open no door; if the Adalantado of Spain were here, he should not enter: one help me with the light, gentlemen; you knock in vain, sir officer.

Carl. *Et tu, Brutel*

Punt. Sirrah, close your lips, or I will drop it in thine eyes, by heaven.

Carl. O! O!

Cons. [*within*]. Open the door, or I will break it open.

Maci. Nay, good constable, have patience a little: you shall come in presently; we have almost done.

[PUNTARVOLO seals up CARLO's lips.

Punt. So, now, are you out of your Humour, sir? Shift, gentlemen.

[*They all draw and run out, except FUNGOSO, who conceals himself beneath the table. Enter CONSTABLE and officers, and seize FASTIDIOUS as he is rushing by.*

Cons. Lay hold upon this gallant, and pursue the rest.

Fast. Lay hold on me, sir, for what?

Cons. Marry, for your riot here, sir, with the rest of your companions.

Fast. My riot! master constable, take heed what you do.

All of this seems to repeat the disturbance of the revellers, by Malvolio. It is interesting, also, to note that, in Jonson's version, Fungoso conceals himself beneath the table, in the same way, perhaps, that he had seen Feste do, upon the stage of the Curtain or the Globe, and as the clown still does, in many modern productions of *Twelfth Night*. The theme is continued in the next scene (V, 5), where Macilente's advice to Deliro—to gain his wife's favour, and "make her dote and grow mad of your affections," by redeeming her brother, Fungoso, left in pawn for the reckoning of a tavern supper—repeats exactly the favour Mal-

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volio may expect to win from Olivia, by putting an end to the unseemly revels of those who have been making "an ale-house of my lady's house."

Down to the close of the play, Jonson will continue his borrowings; the last scene of all, with Fallace and Fastidious Brisk in the Counter, being an echo, I think, of Malvolio in the stables:

Fall. O, master Fastidious, what pity is it to see so sweet a man as you are, in so sour a place. [*Kisses him.*]

Cor. As upon her lips, does she mean?

Mit. O, this is to be imagined the Counter, belike.

Fast. Troth, fair lady, tis first the pleasure of the fates, and next of the constable, to have it so; but I am patient, and indeed comforted the more in your kind visit.

Even more interesting, however, is the passage commencing towards the end of Fallace's fourth speech, which runs thus:

Fall. O master Brisk, as 'tis in *Euphues*, "Hard is the choice, when one is compelled either by silence to die with grief, or by speaking to live with shame."

Fast. Fair lady, I conceive you, and may this kiss assure you, that where adversity hath, as it were, contracted, prosperity shall not—Od's me! your husband.

Enter DELIRO and MACILENTE.

Fall. O me!

Deli. Ay, is it thus?

Maci. Why, how now, signior Deliro, hath the wolf seen you ha! Hath Gorgon's head made marble of you?

Deli. Some planet strike me dead!

Maci. Why, look you, sir, I told you, you might have suspected this long afore, had you pleased, and have saved this labour of admiration now and passion, and such extremities as this frail lump of flesh is subject unto. Nay, why do you not doat now, signior? methinks you

should say it were some enchantment, *deceptio visus*, or so, ha! If you could persuade yourself it were a dream now, 'twere excellent: faith, try what you can do, signior, it may be your imagination will be brought to it in time; there's nothing impossible

Now here the last quoted lines of Fallace:

Hard is the choice, when one is compelled either by silence to die with grief, or by speaking to live with shame—

seems to be a last reminder of Viola, while Macilente's above quoted speech—and Macilente, be it remembered, who "was Asper at the first,"¹ almost certainly voices Jonson, and may have been played by him—seems to be a sneer at the fantastic impossibility of *Twelfth Night*, with its "labour of admiration and passion," its harping upon "such extremities as this frail lump of flesh is subject unto," and its dream-like enchantment, or *deceptio visus*. Unreal, and therefore undesirable according to Ben Jonson, the realist—and, perhaps, to some others, who thought like him²—is this latest of his friend's comedies; but "it may be that your imagination will be brought to it in time; there's nothing impossible." Jonson's own imagination, however, narrow, rigid, circumscribed, will never, in this world, be brought to it, except for purposes of parody, or of imitation; and, were he conscious now of the trend of the three and a quarter centuries that have passed since then, one of the things that would

¹This is from Macilente's last speech, which, with a few lines between Mitis and Cordatus, and the Epilogue spoken by Macilente at the presentation of the play before Queen Elizabeth, first appear in the Folio.

²Pepys, for example.

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most surprise him, would be the knowledge of how spontaneously and continuously, with what intense delight, past all their powers of telling, millions of imaginations, more flexible than his own, were to feast upon the beauties of *Twelfth Night*, and to number the people of Illyria among their perpetual and dearest friends.

Lastly, let us ring down the curtain upon Macilente's speech, closing the play, as it was first published in quarto form. Its opening lines, with their parting reference to Malvolio, run thus:

What, do you sigh? this is to kiss the hand of a countess, to have her coach sent for you, to hang poniards in ladies' garters, to wear bracelets of their hair, and for every one of these great favours to give some slight jewel of five hundred crowns or so: why tis nothing. Now, monsieur, you see the plague that treads upon the heels of your foppery . . . Away, good pomander, go!

Fastidious thereupon goes out; and, the stage being now left empty, Macilente-Jonson delivers himself of the following characteristic speech:

Why here's a change! now is my soul at peace;
I am as empty of all envy now,
As they of merit to be envied at.
My humour, like to flame, no longer lasts
Than it hath stuff to feed it; and their folly
Being now raked up in their repentant ashes,
Affords no ampler subject to my spleen.
I am so far from malicing their states,
That I begin to pity them. It grieves me
To think they have a being. I could wish
They might turn wise upon it, and be saved now,
So heaven were pleased; but let them vanish, vapours—
Gentlemen, how like you it? has't not been tedious?

A strange and ambiguous oration! With the passing of the play and its puppets and of Shakespeare's people, too, who were ever flitting ghost-like behind it—Jonson's spleen, having no longer, any more than has his comedy, "stuff to feed it," evaporates, at last; and this self-appointed, and somewhat self-righteous, scourge of contemporary folly, leaves "malicing their states," and begins, instead, to pity them, just as in almost identical language, he left rage for pity, when "the poet-ape"¹ had turned also from brokage to bold theft.

Sad, and rather pathetic to me—enigmatic, too, in the circumstances that attend it—is this tale of Jonson's retaliatory borrowings from his friend; the more so, when we bear in mind that, ten years later, Jonson will base another and better comedy almost wholly upon *Twelfth Night*.

¹ Poor poet-ape, that would be thought our chief,
Whose works are e'en the frippery of wit,
From brokage is become so bold a thief,
That we, the robbed, leave rage, and pity it.

CHAPTER VI

"JULIUS CÆSAR" AND "SEJANUS"

Endeavours to show, by many parallel quotations, that Jonson's *Sejanus*, despite its classical allusions and notations, is, in fact, drawn largely from Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*; that it contains typical rationalistic criticisms of Shakespeare's romanticism, moral sense, and idealization of women; and is, at the same time, an attempt by Jonson to show how such a Roman play should be written.

Shakespeare himself, in the character of Cremutius Cordus, seems, nevertheless, to be well spoken of, and—though with partly ironical intention—is apparently introduced, to defend his "annals," otherwise his own play, *Julius Cæsar*, which, as eulogizing the Essex conspiracy, had brought him into grave danger.

JULIUS CÆSAR, almost certainly, was written by Shakespeare with direct reference to the Essex conspiracy, which had brought his patron, Southampton to political ruin, and Essex to an ignominious death. The conspirators, in that play, are, in my view, the Essex faction, risen against that section of the court party headed by Burleigh, and later by Robert Cecil—a group of which Essex's rival, Raleigh, also formed one.¹

Much of all this must have been patent to Shakespeare's contemporaries. The audiences,

¹I am inclined to think that the Polonius of *Hamlet* may have stood for Burleigh, and that the assignment of the part of Julius Cæsar to Polonius, as an actor, may have been deliberately intended by Shakespeare, as a hint that Polonius and Julius Cæsar are, in their originals, Burleigh himself, with some succession to Robert Cecil, after his father's death, in August, 1598. Thus considered, the line, "I did enact Julius Cæsar. I was killed in the capitol. Brutus killed me,"—followed by Hamlet's sneer: "It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there"—takes on a larger meaning, and helps to explain the comparative insufficiency of Julius Cæsar's personality commented on by so many critics.

that flocked to *Julius Cæsar*, recognized, or thought they recognized, and speculated concerning, the originals of the characters therein; and the poignant drama—fine acting play as it is—aroused, no doubt intense interest, and animated discussion. Had Shakespeare been a bigger man, socially, than mere player and playwright, his rashness, in penning it, would probably have cost him his liberty, if not his life. As things were, protected by his relative unimportance, and, possibly, by proofs that he had been urged by his patrons to do what, upon his own initiative, he would have refrained from—the episode merely lowered his fortunes, for the time being, along with those of the Essex party, until the death of Queen Elizabeth and the accession of James, brought Southampton out of the Tower, and *Julius Cæsar* back upon the stage, though not in the form in which we know it to-day. That it again won popular success seems to be the fact; and again Jonson, satiated with his not too successful experiments in topical satire, and their unpleasant repercussions upon himself, and induced by considerations of policy to be reconciled, superficially at any rate, with Shakespeare, now again recognized at court—eager also, as practising dramatists were then, and are still, to take occasion by the hand—decides that, in accordance with his intention, publicly expressed at the close of *The Poetaster*, he will turn from comedy, and try his hand at something to be sung "high and aloof," in the heroic tragic vein.¹

¹*Horace.*

And since the Comic Muse
Hath proved so ominous to me, I will try

That something is *Sejanus*, first undertaken in collaboration with "a second pen," which may possibly have been Shakespeare's, but was much more probably that of Chapman, though, in the version that has come down to us, Chapman's share—or whosoever it was—has been eliminated, Jonson, in his own phrase, choosing rather to supplement the play, in its new form with "weaker lines of mine own than to defraud so happy a genius of his right by my now loathed usurpation."

Now *Sejanus*, as I am about to show, has a close connection with *Julius Cæsar*; and a study of it confronts us again with complex questions similar to those which repeatedly presented themselves when we were considering *Every Man Out of His Humour*, in its relation to *Twelfth Night*. On the face of it here is a Roman tragedy, based upon Tacitus, and other classical historians, loans from which are carefully noted by Jonson, throughout the text of his play, in order "to show my integrity in the story and save myself in those common torturers that bring all wit to the rack, whose noses are ever like swine, spoiling and rooting up the Muses' Gardens."¹ Those words, however, were written, I suspect, with a secondary intention, namely, to forestall such persons as might venture to hint that Jonson's play owed more to Shakespeare than its author was prepared to acknowledge or to admit; and the fact of the matter, in my judg-

If Tragedy have a more kind aspect;

Leave me! There's something come into my thought
That must and shall be sung high and aloof,
Save from the wolf's black jaw, and the dull ass's hoof.

¹Preliminary address to the Readers.

ment, is that this tragedy, like *Julius Caesar*, is a contemporary conspiracy play, courageously written, to take topical advantage of the political situation, and, at the same time, to show Shakespeare exactly how such a Roman play should be written.¹ That this was a hazardous piece of work, on Jonson's part, we might have assumed, even though we did not know, as we do from *The Conversations*, that "he was called before the Councell for his *Sejanus*, and accused both of popperie and treason by him (Northampton)."²

This public charge Jonson seems to have been able to set aside, but the more private and particular charge, which may well have been brought against him, that, in this tragedy, he played once more a too characteristic double game with Shakespeare, is one that cannot easily have been refuted, any more than it can easily be explained by us. Let us briefly examine *Sejanus*, in its relation to *Julius Caesar*.

Within the first sixty lines or so, preceding the entry of Cordus, are to be found words and ideas clearly echoing Shakespeare's play, including such phrases as "guilty men," twice repeated—recalling at once Flavius's

They vanish tongue-tied in their guiltiness—
and also Silvius's words, concerning the patrons and the patronized:—

¹Mr. William Poel writes to me: "*Sejanus his Fall* seems to have been written as a counterblast to Shakespeare's tragedy, *Julius Caesar*." Both plays reflect incidents connected with Essex's conspiracy and death; but Jonson in his play challenges Shakespeare's right to regard Brutus and Cassius, the men who assassinated Julius Caesar, as worthy to be called *noble* Romans.

²R. F. Patterson's edn., p. 29.

sell to gaping suitors

The empty smoke that flies about the palace;
Laugh when their patron laughs; sweat when he sweats;
Be hot and cold with him

all which needs but little distortion to make it applicable to the man who would

Stale with ordinary oaths his love
To every new protester.

The frequently recurring ideas of flattery, too, in this play; of "tyrant's arts" also, and of men prepared for servitude, as against

We that within this four score years were born
Free, equal lords of the triumphant world,

all attest eloquently, a single origin.

Were I asked why Jonson, with an abundance of classical incident and dialogue to draw upon, cannot, nevertheless, refrain from drawing, even in his first scene, upon Shakespeare, I answer that, gifted as he was with a retentive memory—"I can repeat whole books that I have read"¹—and an extraordinary capacity for assimilating knowledge, accompanied by limited imaginative powers, and a peculiarly rigid mind—his whole mentality, bursting with other men's thoughts, had so little space left for its own originalities, that imitation was becoming almost habitual to him. As we know from his writings on "style," toward the close of *Discoveries*,² imitation formed part of his studied philosophy of a writer's art.

¹*Discoveries*, LVI, Memories.

²Temple edn., p. 119.

"Imitatio, to be able to convert the substance or riches of another poet to his own use," not by servile copying, but by feeding with appetite, and then setting the "stomach to concoct, divide, and turn all into nourishment."

And again, when considering life as a play; "We do so insist in imitating others, as we cannot when it is necessary return to ourselves,"¹ a difficulty with which, in playwriting, Jonson was constantly faced, and which, in *Epicæne* especially, he learned, at last, most cleverly in part to overcome.

Returning to *Sejanus* (I, 1) we come to the first entry of Cremutius Cordus;² and one's pulses quicken a little, if the reader believes, as the writer does, that Cordus is Shakespeare himself.

Cor. [*salutes Sabinus*]. Hail to your lordship.

Nat. [*whispers LATIARIS*]. Who's that salutes your cousin?

Lat. Tis one Cordus,

A gentleman of Rome; one that has writ

Annals of late, they say, and very well.

Nat. Annals of what time?

Lat. I think of Pompey's,

And Caius Cæsar's; and so down to these.

Nat. How stands he affected to the present state?

Is he or Drusian or Germanican,

Or ours or neutral?

Lat. I know him not so far.

Nat. Those times are somewhat queasy to be touch'd.

Have you seen, or heard, part of his work?

Lat. Not I; he means they shall be public shortly.

Deferring to the more significant appearance of

¹*Ibid.*, LXXXV, De Vita humana, Temple edn., p. 56.

²Cremutius Cordus was a Roman historian, under Tiberius, distinguished by his frankness. He is mentioned by Tacitus.

Cordus, in the third act, the main support of my argument, that he stands for Shakespeare,¹ I will here merely point out to the reader, that Cordus, in the passage above quoted, is described as a writer of recent annals, which he intends shortly to publish, concerning those times "queasy to be touch'd," of Pompey and Caius Cæsar. Now those "annals," as we shall see later, are, almost certainly, Shakespeare's play of *Julius Cæsar*, a subject queasy, indeed, to be touched, as touching upon the Essex conspiracy.

Right upon the heels of our introduction to Cordus, come words from Arruntius, that have a familiar ring:

Arr. Times! the men,

The men are not the same: 'tis we are base,
 Poor, and degenerate from the exalted strain
 Of our great fathers. Where is now the soul
 Of God-like Cato? he, that durst be good,
 When Cæsar durst be evil; and had power,
 As not to live his slave, to die his master?
 Or where's the constant Brutus, that being proof
 Against all charm of benefits, did strike
 So brave a blow into the monster's heart
 That sought unkindly to captive his country?
 O, they are fled the light! Those mighty spirits
 Lie raked up with their ashes in their urns,
 And not a spark of their eternal fire
 Glows in a present bosom
 There's nothing Roman in us; nothing good,
 Gallant or great: 'tis true that Cordus says,
 "Brave Cassius was the last of all that race."

This speech, it will be observed, is almost a paraphrase of Cassius's lines (*Julius Cæsar*, I, 2):

¹See pp. 120-24.

Age, thou art shamed!

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was famed with more than with one man?
When could they say till now, that talked of Rome,
That her wide walls encompassed but one man?
Now is it Rome indeed and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.
O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king.

And Arruntius's words

Or where's the constant Brutus, that . . .
did strike

So brave a blow into the monster's heart
That sought unkindly to captive his country?

echo certainly Antony's speech;

If Brutus so unkindly knocked or no!—

and Cordus's quoted words, upon which Arruntius ends his lament—

Brave Cassius was the last of all his race—

are actually spoken, though in slightly different form, by Brutus over his friend's dead body.

Thou last of all the Romans, fare thee well!

At that moment, there passes over the stage the Emperor's son, young Drusus, "a riotous youth," and a little, therefore, of the Antony persuasion. Then, from Silius, we get, concerning Germanicus,

a speech almost wholly applicable to the character, and fall, of Shakespeare's Brutus.

Sil. He was a man most like to virtue; in all,
 And every action, nearer to the gods,
 Than men, in nature; of a body as fair
 As was his mind; and no less reverend
 In face, than fame: he could so use his state,
 Tempering his greatness with his gravity,
 As it avoided all self-love in him,
 And spite in others. What his funerals lack'd
 In images and pomp, they had supplied
 With honourable sorrow, soldier's sadness,
 A kind of silent mourning, such as men,
 Who know no tears, but from their captives, use
 To show in so great losses.

All this is very near to Shakespeare's phraseology, concerning "the noblest Roman of them all"; and the lines by Sabinus, a little lower down, not only mention "wise Butus's temperance," but speak also of the virtues that "flow mix'd" in Germanicus, thus repeating Shakespeare's line concerning Brutus (*Julius Cæsar*, V, 5):

So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up

The parallels follow, each close upon the heels of the other. Such a line as

And that they knew
 Who did remove him hence

is plainly borrowed from Antony (*Julius Cæsar*, III, 2):

And that they knew full well
 That gave me public leave to speak of him;
 and Sabinus's

When men grow fast
Honour'd and loved. . .

echoes Antony's message, by his servant, to the conspirators (*Julius Cæsar*, III. I):

Say I fear'd Cæsar, honour'd him and loved him.

Messrs. Herford and Simpson, in their introduction to *Sejanus*, write: "It is certain that *Julius Cæsar* counted for much more than Jonson would have acknowledged or was aware of. He planned his work in conscious and even disdainful emulation." With this dictum, generally, I am quite in accord; but, for reasons which will become clear, as we proceed with our examination of the text of *Sejanus*, it seems certain to me that Jonson's emulation, while, as usual, mingled with disdain, was not more imitative than he was aware of. Jonson's borrowings, on the contrary, were as deliberate and calculated as they had been when he drew *Every Man Out of His Humour* from *Twelfth Night*.

The speeches of Silius, Arruntius, and Sabinus, concerning Sejanus, that follow—such as:

He is now the court god; and well applied
With sacrifices of knee, of crooks, and cringes;

together with:

And now the second face of the whole world!
The partner of the empire, hath his image
Rear'd equal with Tiberius, born in ensigns;

are taken from Cassius's diatribe against Cæsar:

This man

Is now become a god, and Cassius is

A wretched creature, and must bend his body
If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him . . .

while Arruntius's speech, towards the close of the first scene:

Yet hath he ambition?
Is there that step in state can make him higher?
Or more, or anything he is, but less?

followed by Silius's:

"Nothing but emperor"—

is all, obviously, from the same source. Scene 2, in its ninth line, gives us, "He is the noblest Roman"; and, in Sejanus's second speech, the phrase, "I have a grief, sir," is reminiscent of:

What private griefs they have, alas, I know not.

There follows, upon the same page (318) of the Everyman edition, this passage, concerning the Princess Livia:

Sej. You minister to a royal lady, then.

Eud. She is, my lord, and fair.

Sej. That's understood

Of all her sex, who are or would be so;

And those that would be, physic soon can make them.

For those that are, their beauties fear no colours.¹

all of which is very characteristic of Jonson, who seems to have believed as little in the natural comeliness, as in the natural morality, of women, and, as we have seen in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, and shall again in *Epicæne*, is always ready to indulge

¹*Julius Cæsar*, II, 1, compare Brutus:

The quarrel
Will bear no colour for the thing he is.

in a rationalistic protest against Shakespeare's predilection for "beauty truly blent." The same idea is further developed in Sejanus's coarse speech, upon the next page, which contains the lines :

Or which her hair, which her complexion,
And, in which box she puts it; These were questions. . .

Once more, then, it will be observed, we are confronted with the same sort of enigma that presented itself in *Every Man Out of His Humour*. Here is Jonson, apparently, again upon good terms with Shakespeare, permitted to produce a play at a theatre in which Shakespeare was a prominent figure, bringing on Shakespeare himself, possibly in person, to defend his own earlier conspiracy play; and yet he is unable to resist the temptation to borrow frequently from that play, and to satirize its author, again and again, in the process.¹ Why were these things allowed? Did Shakespeare connive at them? No wholly satisfying answer seems possible; but it is difficult to resist the conclusion that Jonson was not altogether straightforward over the business; and it is significant that, after *Sejanus*, so far as we know, the relations between the pair were never again very close or friendly.

With the entry of Tiberius and Drusus, Jonson develops the flattery motive, which also is made play with in *Julius Caesar*, III, 1, as for example, by Decius:

¹Professor Herford has pointed out that *Sejanus* was well on the way before James I came to the throne; and that when Jonson sat down to write his tragedy, *Julius Caesar* was still one of the resounding successes of the day.

But when I tell him he hates flatterers,
He says he does, being then most flattered.

Jonson, with characteristic iteration of theme and phrase, harps upon this motive almost to the end of the scene, repeating the word, in one form or another, no less than eight times, in such lines as :

Tib. We not endure these flatteries.

Tib. We must make up our ears 'gainst these assaults
Of charming tongues.

Arr. Of all wild beasts preserve me from a tyrant:
And of all tame, a flatterer.

and so forth, including a line by Latiaris,

They stay thy answer, Cæsar—

corresponding exactly with the scene (*Julius Cæsar*, II, 1) in which Decius comes to fetch Cæsar to the Senate House, and, when he refuses, begs to know the cause:

Lest I be laugh'd at when I tell them so—

while the speech by Silenus, that follows:

Men are deceived who think there can be thrall
Beneath a virtuous prince. Wish'd liberty
Ne'er lovelier looks than under such a crown¹—

is, I imagine, in part, a compliment to James I, and, in part, a challenge to the opinions, so freely vented in *Julius Cæsar*, concerning the public

¹*Cf.* Brutus' speech, *Julius Cæsar*, II, 1:

Crown him?—that;—

And then, I grant, we put a sting in him . . . ,
also

What he is, augmented
Would run to these and these extremities.

danger of entrusting too much power to one man.

The other borrowings that I have noted, up to the end of Act I, are:

Cor. Great Pompey's theatre was never ruin'd
Till now, that proud Sejanus hath a statue
Rear'd on his ashes:

which reminds us of "great Pompey" and of "Pompey's statuē."¹ Drusus must next be listened to, because his

The first ascents to sovereignty are hard;
But, entered once, there never wants or means,
Or ministers, to help the aspirer on.

seems to derive, in spirit, if not in words, from Brutus (*Julius Cæsar*, II, 1):

But 'tis a common proof
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder—

both speeches conveying something of the idea, *per arduas ad astra*.

Drusus, it may be noted, applied the word "Colossus" to Sejanus, just as Cassius does to Cæsar; and Sejanus, in the last speech of the act,

He that, with such wrong moved, can bear it through
With patience—

has certainly overheard Portia's question to her husband, "Can I bear that with patience?"

In the first scene of Act II, the borrowings begin at once, the first being Livia's, "He must be wrought," echoing Cassius's, "Thy honourable metal may be wrought"; and the second Sejanus's,

¹*Julius Cæsar*, I, 1. Also "Pompey's basis," *Julius Cæsar*, III, 1, and *Julius Cæsar*, III, 2.

"Send him to me, I'll work him," which we have heard before, from Decius, in the form, "Let me work" (*Julius Cæsar*, II, 1). Then, with the re-entry of Eudemus, the physician, his conversation with Livia, and the cheek-painting episode, we come upon another of those anti-romantic, anti-feministic scenes, that Jonson, with his low opinion of women, and his anti-Shakespearean bias, in this respect, was ever ready to introduce. Yet, curiously enough, at the very moment when, by implication, at any rate, he is scorning his friend's falsely romantic ideals of womanhood, he is making Eudomus borrow Portia's phrase from that scene (II, 1) of *Julius Cæsar*, which is then uppermost in his mind:

Think you I am no stronger than my sex?

lines that reappear, in *Sejanus*, thus:

Eud. The ages that succeed, and stand far off
To gaze at your high prudence, shall admire,
And reckon it an act without your sex.

Jonson seems to have the same dialogue in mind, when he makes *Sejanus* say, immediately after, upon his re-entry:

You have my soul,
As certain yours as it is my body's;

which I suppose to have been suggested by Brutus' words, to Portia:

As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
That visit this sad heart:

and it is further notable that Livia, in her fourth

speech from the end of the same scene (II, 1), uses the expression:

My lord, I shall but change your words;¹

which is precisely what Jonson was then in process of doing to Shakespeare—a line from her next speech, for example—

The thoughts be best are least set forth to show—
being, I suggest, a paraphrase of Brutus' unspoken advice to the conspirators:

Hide it in smiles and affability.

The second scene of this act opens with a speech, by Sejanus, of which the last line:

'Twas only fear first in the world made gods—
may well have been suggested by Cæsar's:

It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
and leads up to the following passage, which is interesting, as being, apparently, a direct negation, aimed by Jonson, at that same speech of Cæsar's, from which a line has just been quoted, beginning:

Cowards die many times before their death;
The valiant never taste of death but once.

The passage in *Sejanus* is as follows:

Tib. Sit down my comfort.² When the master prince
Of all the world, Sejanus, saith he fears,
Is it not fatal?

¹Jonson's consciousness that he was doing so very probably shaped the phrase.

²Jonson's note is, "De hac consultatione," *vid.* Suet. Tib., c. 55.

Sej. Yes, to those are fear'd.

Tib. And not to him?

Sej. Not if he wisely turn

That part of fate he holdeth, first on them.

Tib. That nature, blood, and laws of kind forbid.

Sej. Do policy and state forbid it?

Tib. No.

Sej. The rest of poor respects, then, let go by;

State is enough to make the act just, them guilty.

Tib. Long hate pursues such acts.

Sej. Whom hatred frights,

Let him not dream of sovereignty.

Jonson's argument here is, that cowards—the men who fear—instead of dying themselves before their death, as Shakespeare has it, are quite as likely to be the cause of immediate death to those who have caused their fear—a characteristic line of reasoning followed by another speech, from *Sejanus* expanding the same theme in which, once more, Jonson's wholly unmoral and rationalistic philosophy seems to challenge Shakespeare's ethical, or even semi-religious, view of public duty, as exemplified in the characters of Brutus and of Julius Cæsar himself.

Sej. All for a crown.

The prince who shames a tyrant's name to bear,

Shall never dare do anything but fear;

All the command of sceptres quite doth perish,

If it begin religious thoughts to cherish;

Whole empires fall, sway'd by those nice respects;

It is the licence of dark deeds protects

Ev'n states most hated, when no laws resist

The sword, but that it acteth what it list.

From that point the duologue between Tiberius

and Sejanus is based, apparently, upon the discussion between the conspirators in *Julius Cæsar*, II, 1, as can be gathered, not only from the general tone, but also from obviously borrowed expressions, such as

The course must be to let them still swell up,
which recalls

Our course would seem too bloody, Caius Cassius;
and

Tib. But who shall first be struck?

Sej. First Caius Silius;

He is the most of mark, and most of danger.

all of which, with what follows, is in the *Julius Cæsar* manner. The most interesting passage of the scene, however, is this one, aiming, no doubt, at Shakespeare, personally, as author of *Julius Cæsar*, and as an adherent of the Essex party.

Sej. Then there is one Cremutius
Cordus, a writing fellow, they have got¹
To gather notes of the precedent times,
And make them into Annals; a most tart
And bitter spirit, I hear; who, under colour
Of praising those, doth tax the present state,
Censures the men, the actions, leaves no trick,
No practise unexamined, parallels
The times, the governments; a profest champion
For the old liberty—

Tib. A perishing wretch!

The last quoted ejaculation probably refers to

¹If my surmise be correct, this passage suggests that Shakespeare was pressed by the Essex faction into writing his play. Mr. Poel holds that *Sejanus* represented Raleigh, a political opponent of Essex.

Shakespeare's desperately precarious position, at the time of Essex's fall.

Before the close of the scene, Jonson makes use of the Cæsar-Calpurnia episode, in Sejanus' second speech from the end—the mother being here substituted for the wife.

Pray Augusta then,
That for her own, great Cæsar's, and the public safety, she be pleased to urge these dangers.
Cæsar is too secure, he must be told,
And best he'll take it from a mother's tongue.

If he, for whom it is so strongly laboured,
Shall, out of greatness and free spirit, be
Supinely negligent. . . .

and Sejanus' last speech returns again to the fear-and-cruelty motive, that he has used at the opening of the scene:

The way to put
A prince in blood, is to present the shapes
Of dangers, greater than they are, like late,
Or early shadows; and, sometimes, to feign
Where there are none, only to make him fear?
His fear will make him cruel: and once enter'd,
He doth not easily learn to stop, or spare
Where he may doubt.

In the third scene of the second act, we are given a description of Domitius Afer, by Arruntius, which is obviously drawn from Antony:

Arr. Ay, there's a man.¹ Afer the orator!

¹The fact that the numerals indicate reference by Jonson to a classical author—in this case Tacitus (*Ann. Lib.* IV, p. 89–93) as his source, does not, in my judgment, preclude a simultaneous borrowing from Shakespeare.

One that hath phrases, figures, and fine flowers,
 To strew his rhetoric with, and doth make haste
 To get him note, or name, by any offer
 Where blood or gain be objects; steeps his words,
 When he would kill, in artificial tears;
 The crocodile of Tyber!

and the opening of the fourth scene furnishes a passage, spoken by Agrippina and Silius respectively, which is interesting, as giving us again, in opposition, something of the Shakespearean and Jonsonian philosophies.

Agri. How can that be, when there's no gain but virtue's?

Sil. You take the moral, not the politic sense.

those lines forming part of a scene which echoes generally the visit of the conspirators to Brutus—

Sil. You may perceive with what officious face,
 Satrius and Natta, Afer, and the rest
 Visit your house, of late, to enquire the secrets—

and concludes thus, upon a strange jumble of Portia, Brutus and Calpurnia:

Sil. Yes, private meetings,
 With a great lady, (sir) at a physicians',
 And a wife turn'd away.¹

Ner. Ha!

Sil. Toys, mere toys;
 What wisdom's now in th' streets, in the common
 mouth?

Dru. Jun. Fears, whisperings, tumults, noise, I know not
 what:

They say the Senate sit

The opening of the first scene of the third act,

¹Cf. the repulse of Calpurnia by Cæsar, *Julius Cæsar*, II, 2.

which takes place in the Senate House, will continue that too slavish adherence to his contemporary text-book words, from which Jonson, when once he had fastened upon them, seemed unwilling, as he was probably unable, to escape. Arruntius's, "What, so low!" derives from Cassius's, "As low as to thy foot" (*Julius Cæsar*, III, 1), and Tiberius's "The face of men" from Brutus, "If not the face of men": but the more wholesale plagiarism begins, after the entrances of Nero and Drusus Junior, with a scene between Tiberius and the Senate, which is Antony and the mob, re-written. Arruntius' speech:—

If this were true now! but the space, the space
Between the breast and lips

repeats Antony's hypocrisy, in the presence of the conspirators; and Arruntius' aside—

Laugh, fathers, laugh: have you no spleen about you?
though expressly noted by Jonson, as coming from Tacitus,¹ sounds, in form and motive, like a sort of metrical antithesis to Antony's

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

I need not quote the whole passage from Jonson; but will insert here only these lines, as typical of his method. The senators are praying for Tiberius (Antony):

Sen. Guard

His meekness, Jove; his piety, his care,
His bounty—

Arr. And his subtilty.

The next scene to which Jonson turns, for copy,

¹*Lib.* IV, p. 76. *Ad vana et toties invisā . . . etc.*

Var. 'Tis I accuse thee, Silius.

Here are the parallels from the two plays:

. . . O, you equal gods! . . . O ye gods, ye gods!

Silius, Silius,
These are the common customs of thy blood,
When it is high with wine, as now with rage:
This well agrees with that intemperate vaunt,
Thou lately mad'st at Agrippina's table—

Nothing is great enough for Silius merit,

reminds us of the words of Cassius, to Brutus :

I cannot drink too much of Brutus love.

In Silius' last speech, before he stabs himself, Jonson reverts again to a Shakespearean line :

Cowards die many times before their death—

of which he has already made use, and which here reappears, in this form :

Sil. The coward and the valiant man must fall,

Only the cause and manner how, discerns them—

wherein both the cause and the manner derive equally from Cassius. The most interesting part of this scene (III, 1), however, follows the entrances of Satirius and Natta, with Cremutius Cordus (Shakespeare) as their prisoner, charged with being a dangerous and factious person, publisher of certain "Annals," wherein he "bites the present eye." Natta says of Cordus :

Thou praisest Brutus and affirm'st

That Cassius was the last of all the Romans

which last line echoes the famous one, spoken by Brutus, over his friend's dead body :

Thou last of all the Romans, fare thee well.¹

Here is a part of the passage, including Shakespeare's defence, which, since we know that he played in *Sejanus*, was, quite possibly, spoken by himself upon the stage :

Sab. . . . —Stay, who is this?

[*Enter SATIRIUS and NATTA, with CREMUTIUS CORDUS guarded.*]

¹*Julius Cæsar*, V, 3.

Cremutius Cordus! What! is he brought in?¹

Arr. More blood into the banquet! Noble Cordus,
I wish thee good: be as thy writings, free,
And honest.

Tib. What is he?

Sej. For the Annals, Cæsar.

Proe. Cremutius Cordus!

Cor. Here.

Proe. Satrius Secundus,
Pinnarius Natta, you are his accusers.

Arr. Two of Sejanus' blood-hounds, whom he breeds
With human flesh, to bay at citizens.

Afer. Stand forth before the Senate, and confront him.

Sat. I do accuse thee here, Cremutius Cordus,
To be a man factious and dangerous,
A sower of sedition in the state,
A turbulent and discontented spirit,
Which I will prove from thine own writings, here,
The Annals thou hast publish'd; where thou bit'st
The present age, and with a viper's tooth,
Being a member of it, dar'st that ill
Which never yet degenerated bastard did
Upon his parent.

Nat. To this I subscribe;
And, forth a world of more particulars,
Instance in only one: comparing men,
And times, thou praisest Brutus, and affirm'st
That Cassius was the last of all the Romans.

Cot. How! what are we then?

Var. What is Cæsar? nothing?

Afer. My lords, this strikes at every Roman's private,
In whom reigns gentry, and estate of spirit,
To have a Brutus brought in parallel,
A parricide, an enemy of his country,
Rank'd, and preferr'd to any real worth

¹This line emphasizes the importance of the stage entry, and lends colour to the supposition that Shakespeare may have played the part.

That Rome now holds. This is most strangely in-
vective,

Most full of spite and insolent upbraiding.
Nor is't the time alone is here disprised,
But the whole man of time, yea, Cæsar's self
Brought in disvalue; and he aimed at most,
By oblique glance of his licentious pen.
Cæsar, if Cassius were the last of Romans,
Thou hast no name.

Tib. Let's hear him answer. Silence!

Cor. So innocent I am of fact, my lords,
As but my words are argued: yet those words
Not reaching either prince or prince's parent:
The which your law of treason comprehends.
Brutus and Cassius I am charged to have praised;
Whose deeds, when many more, besides myself,
Have writ, not one hath mention'd without honour

But, in my work,
What could be aim'd more free, or farther off
From the time's scandal, than to write of those,
Whom death from grace or hatred had exempted?
Did I, with Brutus and with Cassius,
Arm'd and possess'd of the Philippi fields,
Incense the people in the civil cause,
With dangerous speeches? Or do they, being slain
Seventy years since, as by their images,
Which not the conqueror hath defaced, appears,
Retain that guilty memory with writers?
Posterity pays every man his honour;
Nor shall there want, though I condemned am,
That will not only Cassius well approve,
And of great Brutus' honour mindful be,
But that will also mention make of me.

Arr. Freely and nobly spoken.

Sab. With good temper;

I like him, that he is not moved with passion.

Arr. He puts them to their whisper.

Tib. Take him hence;

We shall determine of him at next sitting.

[*Exeunt OFFICERS with CORDUS.*]

Cot. Mean time, give order, that his books be burnt,
To the ædiles.

Sej. You have well advised.

Afe. It fits not such licentious things should live
T'upbraid the age.

Arr. If the age were good, they might.

Lat. Let them be burnt.

Gal. All sought, and burnt to-day.

Proe. The court is up; lictors, resume the fasces.

[*Exeunt all but ARRUNTIVS, SABINVS, and LEDIVS.*]

Arr. Let them be burnt! O, how ridiculous

Appears the senate's brainless diligence,
Who think they can, with present power, extinguish
The memory of all succeeding times!

Sab. Tis true; when, contrary, the punishment

Of wit, doth make the authority increase.

Nor do they aught, that use this cruelty

Of interdiction, and this rage of burning,

But purchase to themselves rebuke and shame,

And to the writers an eternal name.

Shakespeare's defence, however, if indeed Cordus's quoted speech be that—is not a piece of original writing by Jonson, but, as Drummond tells us in his *Conversations with Ben Jonson*,¹ is from Tacitus:

"In his *Sejanus* he hath translated a whole oration of Tacitus: the first four books of Tacitus ignorantly done in English."

¹R. F. Patterson's edn., pp. 49, 50. The passage is from the annals, 34, 35. Jonson, it seems, deliberately adapts, and applies, speeches from the classics to topical themes; perhaps in order that he may the more easily disclaim, should he wish to.

The speech, though too classically learned for the real Shakespeare, is true to him, in its balance and good temper; and, if a topical application may be fairly given to the lines, it is interesting to note the argument that his play *Julius Cæsar*, does not touch "either prince or prince's parent," by which he may mean either James I or Elizabeth; and the lines:

Did I with Brutus and with Cassius,
Arm'd and possess'd of the Philippian Fields,
Incense the people in the civil cause,
With dangerous speeches

seem to imply that, apart from the penning of his play, Shakespeare took no active part in the Essex rebellion.

The concluding lines of Cordus's speech are notable, as indicating Shakespeare's proud consciousness that the name of the tragedy's author, along with those of its heroes, would go down to posterity, and his

lofty scene be acted o'er
In states unborn and accents yet unknown.

It is significant, too, that Sabinus's last words upon the episode, and the final reference to Cordus in the play, foretell, to the writer of the annals, "an eternal name."

Scene two, of this third act, at once reintroduces the conspirator motive, this passage:

Sej. Sabinus shall be next.

Tib. Rather Arruntius.

Sej. By any means, preserve him. His frank tongue

Being let the reins, would take away all thought
Of malice, of your course against the rest:
We must keep him to stalk with.

being obviously an imitation of *Julius Cæsar*, II, 1, "But what of Cicero!" etc. The remainder of the act, though occasionally following Shakespeare afar off, is comparatively original, granted that Tiberius's description of Macro, towards the close:

Macro is sharp, and apprehends: besides,
I know him subtle, close, wise and well read
In man, and his large nature; he hath studied
Affections, passions, knows their springs, their ends,
Which way, and whether they will work—

is drawn, I should say, from Cæsar's well-known commentary upon Cassius:

He is a great observer, and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men.

The closing lines of the short second scene are taken from Brutus's soliloquy (II, 1), which Jonson has already drawn upon, to some extent, in the second scene of the preceding act. They are:

The weight of preparation to his fall
Will turn on thee, and crush thee: therefore strike
Before he settle, to prevent the like
Upon thyself. He doth his vantage know,
That makes it home, and gives the foremost blow:

and their source is:

Fashion it thus; that what he is, augmented,
Would run to these and these extremities:
And therefore think him as a serpent's egg

Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
And kill him in the shell.

Scene three reveals no very conspicuous borrowings, until after the halfway line; but its latter part teems with them, the first being Latiaris' speech:

Why we are worse, if to be slaves, and bond
To Cæsar's slaves be such, the proud Sejanus!
He that is all, does all, gives Cæsar leave
To hide his ulcerous and anointed face,
With his bald crown at Rhodes, while here he stalks
Upon the heads of Romans, and their princes,
Familiarly to empire.¹

an inversion of Cassius's

We petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.

Sabinus's words, a little lower down—

Under the show of friendship, to beware
of Cæsar—

remind one of "Beware of Brutus," and the same speaker's,

Yea, all the army have their eyes on him
That both do long to have him undertake
Something of worth, to give the world a hope;

paraphrases, almost, Cassius's first appeal to Brutus (I, 2):

I have heard,
Where many of the best respect in Rome,

¹Jonson has references to Tacitus on the words "face" and "Rhodes," which are precisely the clauses in the speech in which no imitation of Shakespeare is observable.

Except immortal Cæsar, speaking of Brutus,
And groaning underneath this age's yoke,
Have wish'd that noble Brutus had his eyes.

Further, the third line from the end of the scene—

Cover him with his garments, hide his face—

was probably suggested by Antony's

And in his mantle muffling up his face.

Scene five, after the entry of Lepidus, has a question, put by Arruntius: "When is our turn to bleed?" which we have heard asked before, in the form, "Who else must be let blood?" and it is amusing to notice that Cassius's plunge into the Tiber, followed by Cæsar himself, as recounted in *Julius Cæsar*, I, 2—"For once upon a raw and gusty day"—reappears in *Sejanus* with variations—the living Cassius being transformed into the corpse of Sabinus, and Cæsar, apparently, into Sabinus's dog, which, on seeing the body thrown into the water, "leap'd in and drowned with it." It is characteristic of Jonson's method, that, in Lepidus's next speech, which is one of advice to Arruntius, he quotes again, though in a wholly different connection, from that same narrative by Cassius. Thus, the expression:

Never stretch

These arms against the torrent,

is, obviously, Jonsonese for Cassius's vigorous description of his battle with the stream:

With lusty sinews throwing it aside,
And stemming it with hearts of controversy.

Sundry critics have commented upon the arti-

ficiality, scrappiness, and heartlessness of this play *Sejanus*; and I agree that it has all these faults; but how could the result be otherwise, when an author, relatively inexperienced, as yet, in dramatic writing, and strictly limited in native imagination, finds himself thus shackled to the text of his model. Jonson, at this period, had not acquired that command of dramatic technique, which, despite his constant addiction to tautology, enabled him, six years later, to write so fine a comedy as *The Silent Woman*.

Thus, then, the scene runs on; not so much imitating as echoing *Julius Cæsar*, in occasional lines, such as Lepidus's

But yesterday the people would not hear,
which repeats haltingly the rhythm of:

But yesterday the word of Cæsar might—
and again:

Lep. I fear you wrong him.

He has the voice to be an honest Roman—
which, surely, is from Antony (*Julius Cæsar*, III, 2):

I fear I wrong the honourable men
Whose daggers have stabbed Cæsar.

Farther, at the end of Arruntius' long speech, a little later on, we get:

(Jove) will sooner rive
A senseless oak with thunder than his trunk!

which is from Casca, during the storm (*Julius Cæsar*, I, 3):

O Cicero!

I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
Have rived the knotty oaks

The close of Act IV is again melodious with echoes, such as:

Pom. . . . Here he gives large amends.

Mar. And with his own hand written.

deriving, I think, from Antony's reference to Cæsar's will; and

Pom. Seeing the people 'gin to favour him.

Ter. He doth repent it now.

which hints at Brutus's rashness, in permitting Antony, against the wish of many of his fellows, to speak at Cæsar's funeral.

With Act V, after the entry of Terentius, and his tale of "a wonder," Jonson plunges once more into direct imitation of passages which, hitherto, he has left alone, principally the second scene of Shakespeare's second act. This is Terentius' news.

Ter. I meet it violent in the people's mouths,
Who run in routs to Pompey's theatre,
To view your statue, which, they say, sends forth
A smoke, as from a furnace, black and dreadful—

all of which, admitting a part origin, as noted by Jonson, in Deodorus's *Roman History*,¹ was also engendered by Decius's tale to Cæsar concerning:

Your statue spouting blood in many pipes.

Jonson develops the whole theme, upon Shakespearean lines:

¹Deo. *Hist. Rom.* Liv. LVIII, p. 717.

Sej. . . . As we set forth unto the Capitol,
Were prodigies.

Ter. I think them ominous; . . .

Besides, in taking your last augury,
No prosperous bird appear'd; but croaking ravens
Flagg'd up and down, and from the sacrifice
Flew to the prison, where they sat all night,
Beating the air with their obstreperous beaks!

all of which is reminiscent of *Julius Cæsar*, II, 2,
wherein Calpurnia

Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch;

and the servant brings to Cæsar the augurers'
message and warning;

They would not have you to stir forth to-day.
Plucking the entrails of an offering forth,
They could not find a heart within the beast.

Sejanus's next speech, beginning,

What excellent fools religion makes of men,

is an interesting touch of fatalistic Jonsonian
scepticism, and its last six lines:

To her I care not, if for satisfying
Your scrupulous phant'sies, I go offer. Bid
Our priest prepare us honey, milk, and poppy,
His masculine odours, and night-vestments; say,
Our rites are instant; which performed, you'll see
How vain and worthy laughter your fears be—

contain more borrowings from *Julius Cæsar*, II, 2,
which forms the basis of so much of this scene.
These three lines of Shakespeare, for example,
Jonson obviously made use of:

For thy humour I'll stay at home.

Go bid the priests do present sacrifice:

and

How foolish do your fears seem now, Calpurnia.

The second and third scenes of this fifth act show no obvious borrowings; but in the fourth, at the close of Sejanus's speech, which precedes the entries of Pomponius and Minutius, Jonson, who has returned to the superstitious theme, borrows, once more, from that second scene of the second act of *Julius Cæsar*, this passage:

Perhaps the thought

And shame of that, made fortune turn her face,

Knowing herself the lesser deity,

And but my servant—

seeming to derive from Cæsar's words, concerning danger:

We are two lions litter'd in one day,

And I the elder and more terrible.

All the theme that follows, with its fiery meteors and portents, and "thousands gazing at it in the streets," are from *Julius Cæsar*, I, 3, and echo such lines as:

Why all these fires, why all these gliding ghosts;

and

Men all in fire walk up and down the street.

Not until the sixth scene are there any more remarkable plagiarisms—two only, taken again from those episodes of *Julius Cæsar* (I, 3 and II, 2)

which, throughout all this part of *Sejanus*, have been present to Jonson's mind. Macro's speech—

The tribunitial dignity and power;
Both which Sejanus is to have this day
Conferr'd upon him, and by public senate

is from Decius:

The Senate have concluded
To give this day a crown to mighty Cæsar:

and these lines of Sejanus, closing the scene:

By you that fools call gods,
Hang all the sky with your prodigious signs,
Fill earth with monsters, drop the scorpion down,
Out of the zodiac, or the fiercer lion,
Shake off the loosen'd globe from her long hinge,
Roll all the world in darkness, and let loose,
The enraged winds to turn up groves and towns!
When I do fear again, let me be struck
With forked fire, and unpitied die;
Who fears is worthy of calamity

repeat the fire and lightning themes of Shakespeare's play (*Julius Cæsar*, I, 3), and echo, certainly, such lines as:

A lion looked on me and went surly by;
and

the scolding winds
Have rived the knotty oaks.

In the eighth scene, Arruntius's scorn of those officious friends, so eager for "a lord-like nod" from Sejanus, was, I suspect, suggested by Cassius's declared wrath, at having to make obeisance,

If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.

In the last scene of the play, following upon the fall of Sejanus, Jonson, for his model, reverts again to the Capitol and Forum episodes, in Act III of *Julius Cæsar*, Macro's words, spoken of Sejanus, "Now you lie as flat," are from Antony's "Dost thou lie so low?" the shouts of the Senators, "Liberty! liberty!" echo Brutus's

Let's all cry peace, freedom, and liberty!

and the long speeches by Terentius, with his

Lend your soft ears to hear, and eyes to weep,
Deeds done by men,

are all paraphrases of the easy gullibility, and blind rages, of the mob, in the oration scenes; the closing line of his third speech, for example, imitating the phraseology of the original, and Terentius's "Nothing but room for wrath" recalling, even in its alliterations,

Now it is Rome indeed, and Rome enough (*Julius Cæsar*, I, 2).

The following passage,

Ter. The whole, and all of what was great Sejanus,
And next, to Cæsar, did possess the world,
Now torn and scatter'd, as he needs no grave;
Each little dust covers a little part:
So lies he no where, and yet often buried!

derives, one would say, from Antony (*Julius Cæsar*, III, 1):

O mighty Cæsar, dost thou lie so low?
Are all the conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils
Shrunk to this little measure?

and shows again, as have so many other quotations

in this chapter, how flat and pedestrian was Jonson's muse, beside that of his master. Nuntius's phrase, "To melt all Rome," reminds one of Marcellus:

O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome!

and the same speaker's words, twenty-four lines from the end of the play:

—Their gall is gone, and now they 'gin to weep
The mischief they have done—

have been heard before, in Antony's (*Julius Cæsar*, III, 2):

O, now you weep, and I perceive you feel
The dint of pity . . .

Jonson, at last, has finished with *Julius Cæsar*; but only because he has finished also with *Sejanus*.

Sejanus does not appear to have been a popular success. Leonard Digges wrote, in 1640, that audiences

prized more
Honest Iago, or the jealous Moore;

and posterity generally, when looking for a Roman play, has gone to Shakespeare rather than to Jonson. But, as Messrs. Herford and Simpson have pointed out, *Sejanus*, despite its "inner poverty in the humanities of the heart," its slightly drawn and clumsily grouped characters, and its pervading atmosphere of scorn and hate—the play is as much a satire as a tragedy—shows a real constructive advance upon any of the humour plays. Jonson has been learning in the best

school; and his slavish adherence to the Shakespearean model—an allegiance almost compelled, it seems, by his utter lack of spontaneous creative imagination—is teaching him, at this time, useful lessons in technique.¹ The tragedy that we have been tracing to its source—clumsy, loose, and unclassical in form, though it be, is certainly transitional towards his three really fine comedies—*Volpone*, played at the Globe in 1605, *The Silent Woman*, 1609, and *The Alchemist*, 1610, which last, especially, with its close continuity of action, is a model of dramatic technique. Concerned as I am, in this book, only with Jonson in his literary relation to Shakespeare, I shall not discuss here either *Volpone* or *The Alchemist* but pass on to the interesting, and pungently satirical, comedy, that came between them, *The Silent Woman*, for which, strangely enough, Jonson conscious that, in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, he had not utilized fully the dramatic possibilities of *Twelfth Night*, turned to that comedy again, and, bringing now, to this second imitation, a wider knowledge of stage requirements, and increased command of character and of situation, achieved a great, though partly vicarious, success.

¹ Mr. William Poel's forthcoming production of *Sejanus* upon a platform stage, will, no doubt, prove it to be a fine acting play.

CHAPTER VII

"*TWELFTH NIGHT*" AND "*EPICÆNE*"

Shows that the relations between Shakespeare and Jonson seem to become less friendly after 1603; and how, in 1609, the year in which the literary controversy between Shakespeare and the University men breaks out again, Jonson publishes *The Silent Woman*, which, despite his disclaiming prologues, is a second travesty, by himself, of *Twelfth Night*, and a deliberate attempt, upon Jonson's part, to show how such a comedy should be written.

FROM what has been written already in these pages, it will be apparent that in the existing state of our knowledge, Jonson's attitude towards Shakespeare has shown itself complex, contradictory, and not easily definable in few words. At the bidding of policy or circumstance, it seems to have oscillated, swiftly and violently, between friendship and scornful animosity. That Jonson, while mentally incapable of fully comprehending—any more than did his contemporaries generally—the abounding greatness of Shakespeare; and hindered, by his sceptically rationalistic temperament, from following with sympathy his friend's idealistic flights, did, nevertheless, at the bottom of his heart, greatly admire the man, may, I think, be assumed; but a character so jealous, headstrong, self-satisfied as Jonson's, and one brought, almost necessarily, by training, and by cast of mind, into an opposite school of literature, was bound, in those lawless and passionate times, to find in Shakespeare a perpetual obstacle to complete

happiness. His imitations of his friend are, in themselves, a tacit admission of inferiority; and, sycophantic though he could be towards great ones, or to those for whom policy dictated friendship, I cannot readily imagine Jonson ever on terms of really close friendship with a dramatist more popular than himself. The “War of the Theatres,” of course, tended, inevitably, to drive the two men into hostile camps; and, as an ally of the enemy, Jonson attacked Shakespeare; but weariness of that empty dispute, the poor figure that Jonson himself cut in it, and, no doubt, the dominant influence of Shakespeare at the Globe, where Jonson would fain have his plays produced, were circumstances that, as we have seen, combined, at last, to bring about a rapprochement. *Every Man Out of His Humour*, though it plainly imitated, and even mocked at, *Twelfth Night*, as well as at certain of its author’s pretensions and ideals, may have recognized the sagacity of Shakespeare, in the character of Cordatus. Shakespeare, we may suppose, having, in his turn, administered his purge, was tolerantly amenable, and after *The Poetaster*, Horace and Crispinus—or Virgil, if you hold Shakespeare to be intended by either of those—come together again; and there seems to be brought about an amicable working arrangement between the two, stimulated, perhaps, upon Jonson’s part, by the desirability of being upon good terms with one whom the new king had restored, through Southampton’s influence, to place and honour again. In 1603, as we have seen, is put on, at the Globe, *Sejanus*, a kind of counterblast to *Julius Cæsar*, in which, neverthe-

less, it seems that Shakespeare himself took part.

From that time forward, however, the understanding and co-operation between the pair apparently diminished, if it did not come to an end; though what circumstances, or events, caused the breach can now be only matter for surmise. A determining one, possibly, was the ironical, anti-Shakespearean intention visibly underlying a superficial friendliness in *Sejanus*; and I hope that I am not doing less than justice to Jonson when I suggest that another likely reason is unwilling, though insistent, jealousy, aroused by the increased reputation, and material prosperity, now rewarding the mature years of Shakespeare's genius, and its alliance with practical sagacity.

Certainly, whatever the cause, there seems to have developed a new alienation between the two men; and a closer alliance, upon Jonson's part, with the university school of writers, of whom Jonson's friend, Chapman was one, and a group of whom are going to join forces against Shakespeare. At what time Jonson penned his well-known sonnet upon the "Poet-Ape," we do not know; but that Shakespeare was there aimed at, seems quite certain, because, as more than one critic has pointed out, Shakespeare is the only writer of the time, whom, so far as we know, it fits with complete accuracy. Jonson seems to have been given to occasional explosions of that kind, judging by the following epigram, aimed at a dramatist unknown, which also is in the "poet-ape" vein.

Playwright, by chance, hearing some toys I'd writ,
Cried to my face they were th'elixir of wit.

And I must now believe him; for to-day,
Five of my jests, thus stolen, past him a play.

Neither that play, nor its writer, can we name; yet one smiles a little at this susceptibility, to a five-jest theft, on the part of an author whom we have just been watching while he appropriated, not five lines, but five hundred, nearly, from his master and friend. Ben, in these matters, was manifestly above the law; whether he had to deal with smaller men, or with the more formidable begetter of "Tales, Tempests, and such like drolleries."

In 1605 *Volpone* was brought out at the Globe, and in the introduction to the printed edition of 1607—a year which found Shakespeare at the height of his powers—Jonson had the effrontery to write:

I shall raise the despised head of poetry again, and strip her out of those rotten and base rags wherewith the times have adulterated her form, restore her to her primitive habit, feature and majesty.

In the prologue, moreover, Shakespeare himself probably, and certainly the non-university dramatists, are attacked in such lines as

Here is rhyme not empty of reason;
and in Jonson's scholarly determination

To mix profit with your pleasure;
And not as some, whose throats their envy failing,
Cry hoarsely, all he writes is railing.
And when his plays come forth, think they can flout
them
With saying, he was a year about them.

That last gibe is possibly aimed at Shakespeare's haste and carelessness; just as the references lower down, to "monstrous and forced action," are a scoff at the unnaturalness of the romantic school, in the eyes of Jonson and his fellow realists.

By 1609, the same year in which Shakespeare published *Troilus*—wherein Chapman especially is attacked, as the eulogist and translator of Homer, and Jonson with him—the warfare, that had been waged by the scholars against Shakespeare, breaks out again. Chapman and Jonson both join in; Roydon issues, or tries to issue, *Willobie His Avis*; ¹ and Florio, who is a member of the same group, brings about an unauthorized publication of Shakespeare's sonnets, wherein, with deliberate intention to mystify the public, he transposes the initials of Southampton's names (H. W.), which appear as W. H.¹ During that year Jonson, Florio, and Chapman all employ Thorpe as their Publisher, Chapman's contribution to the symposium being *Tears of Peace*. In that same year, 1609, moreover, appears the first quarto edition of the play *Pericles*, which was certainly not written by Shakespeare, though it is largely made up of passages concocted from a number of his plays. It is also worthy of notice that, about the same time, from the year 1608 onwards, other plays appear, including *Timon of Athens* and *Henry VIII*, concerning both of which there is question as to how much of them, if any, was written by Shakespeare, and to what extent, if at all, their publication was authorized by himself.

¹Acheson's *Shakespeare's Sonnet Story*, p. 446.

Between many, and possibly all, of these interesting, though now obscure, contemporary events, there is, almost certainly, some more or less direct connection, the degree and manner of which is now lost to us. We can only conjecture. Shakespeare may have been ill, or too wearied by the exhausting mental exertions and anxieties of the past ten years, to plunge any longer into the hurly-burly of diurnal business, or to care to take active steps for the protection of all his interests. He was still, as I suppose, a shareholder in the Globe Theatre, with heavy responsibilities towards other shareholders, as well as towards his own family; so that, from the economic point of view alone, there well may have been, and probably were, strong reasons for the continued appearance of plays bearing his name, and carrying the weight of his prestige; even though the exact truth of the matter must be a little strained in the process.

My own theory is, that, whatever his reasons may have been, Shakespeare did actually leave London permanently in 1609, and not, as is more generally held, in 1611¹; and that the fact of his withdrawal, or the mere knowledge of its imminence, encouraged, if it did not cause, the appearance of these wholly, or partially, unauthorized publications, such as *The Sonnets*, *Pericles*, and the rest.

For Shakespeare's rivals and opponents, of course, his absence providentially cleared the way; and, if my theory be the true one, Jonson seized the opportunity again to make dramatic use of the master's work, wisely, upon this occasion, using,

¹The date assigned, for example, by the Cambridge editors.

not a third Shakespearean play, but that same comedy from which he had wrought, unsuccessfully, *Every Man Out Of His Humour*—namely, *Twelfth Night*. Again he will "play all his own play before him"¹ courting the wench "in his garb," in his phrase, "with his face," borrowing with equal effrontery, from his original, characters, situations, ideas, dialogue, and all; but, this time, he will do it with a far more mature technique at his command, and less in the spirit of a collaborator, paying to a master—though unacknowledged as such—the sincerest flattery of imitation, than of a rival and opponent, determined, once for all, to show up his man. He will teach those two arch-stealers and poet-apes—Shakespeare, and Wilkins too²—exactly how this should be done. Here shall be no such sprawling over the decades, as Wilkins treats his patrons to in *Pericles*, nor any of that romantic unreality of place, character, and circumstance, such as the Globe audiences were still having thrown at them, in revivals of *Twelfth Night*. Jonson will show them "the better way," will pay, to his classical masters, the respect of scrupulous adherence to unities of place and time; and, for the no-man's land of a fantastic Illyria, will give them the London that they know.

It is but fair to Jonson to admit that all these things he did; and did them extremely well. I am about to prove, I hope, that *Epicæne*, like *Pericles*, is, using a Jonsonian phrase, an "alms-basket" of Shakespearean wit; yet there is no denying that the

¹Crites (Jonson) in *Cynthia's Revels*, V, See *ante* p. 82.

²See Chapter IX on *Pericles*, in which I seek to prove that Wilkins is the sole author of that play.

play, with all its faults, is an admirable one. The characters, though in part borrowed, are sufficiently true to life; and, moreover, as Dryden has pointed out, the comedy "lies all within the compass of two hours, and after the first act in one. The continuity of scenes is observed more than in any of our plays except his own *Fox* and *Alchemist*." When we remember also that the action is concluded within the time taken by the performance of the play; it becomes comprehensible why, for these and other reasons, Dryden prefers *The Silent Woman* before all other plays, I think justly; as I do its author in judgment above all other poets."

Pepys, another typical playgoer of his day, was of much the same opinion; for he saw the play several times, and wrote in his diary, for September 19, 1668:

To the King's Playhouse, and there saw *The Silent Woman*¹ the best comedy I think, that ever was wrote, and sitting by Shadwell, the poet, he was big with admiration of it—

all which becomes the more interesting when we remember that, of its original, *Twelfth Night*, he had no good opinion, as witness the following entries.

Sept. 11, 1661 Walking through Lincolns Inn Fields

¹The diary contains eight references to *The Silent Woman*, which, evidently, was often revived in Pepys' day. This note of his first visit is interesting. January 7, 1660-61. "After dinner (leaving 12*d.* with the servants to buy a cake with at night, this day being kept as Twelfth day) Tom and I and my wife to the theatre, and there saw *The Silent Woman*. The first time that ever I did see it, and it is an excellent play." Its revival on *Twelfth Night* suggests that its connection with Shakespeare's play may have been recognized in some quarters.

observed at the Opera a new play, *Twelfth Night*, was acted there, and the king there; so I, against my own mind and resolution, could not forbear to go in, which did make the play seem a burthen to me, and I took no pleasure at all in it.

And to show that his boredom was more than mere irritation at his own profitless snobbery, there is corroboration, some sixteen months later:

(Jan. 6, 1662.3) After dinner to the Duke's House and there saw *Twelfth Night* acted well, though it be but a silly play, and not related at all to the name or day.

Pepys, however, we can put aside intellectually, as having neither the romantic nor imaginative qualities of mind, nor indeed, I think, the nobility of soul, which is essential to a full appreciation of Shakespeare; but Dryden is another matter. He is able sufficiently to appreciate Shakespeare to derive from him inspiration for his own dramas; so that, as himself admits, he was able, in *Love for Love*, by imitating *Antony and Cleopatra*, to excel himself throughout the play. Jonson did the same, with *Twelfth Night*; and the result is, by common consent, his best comedy, and, in Dryden's opinion, apparently, the best that ever was written. Shakespeare, triumphant in himself, is the cause also of other men's triumphs—of Ben Jonson's pre-eminently, of Dryden's, of George Wilkins', and of Fletcher's, too.

But let us get back to *Epicæne*: and before I pass on to a detailed examination of the comedy, in its relation to *Twelfth Night*, we will glance at the preliminary matter.

The comedy was first printed in quarto, with

this somewhat cryptic motto, from Horace's first book of Satires (IV, 5):

Ut sis tu similis Coeli, Byrrhique latronum,
Non ego sim Capri, neque Sulci. Cur metuas me?—

words which at once suggest that there had been passing already, in connection with the play, charges that Jonson was eager to refute, if he could. Byrrhus and Cœlus were two robber friends. Who Caprus may have been, I do not know; but Sulcius was an informer, whom Horace describes as being hoarse with the number of defamations to which he daily gave vent—Jonson's express repudiation of any offence that could make him comparable with Sulcius seems therefore to show that he had been accused of defaming somebody in this play. Further, his introductory letter to Sir Francis Stuart, concluding as follows:

There is not a line or syllable in it changed from the simplicity of the first copy. And when you shall consider, through the certain hatred of some, how much a man's innocency may be endangered by an uncertain accusation; you will, I doubt not, so begin to hate the iniquity of such natures, as I shall love the contumely done me, whose end was so honourable as to be wiped off by your sentence—

and confirming the motto, reveals him again as the subject of some "uncertain accusation." Precisely what that accusation was, and to what extent it may justly be regarded as "uncertain," it becomes now my duty to make evident.

We come next to the prologues of which Jonson wrote two—one apparently before, and the other after, production. The first runs as follows:

Truth says, of old the art of making plays
Was to content the people; and their praise
Was to the poet money, wine, and bays.

But in this age a sect of writers are,
That only for particular likings care,
And will taste nothing that is popular.

With such we mingle neither brains nor breasts;
Our wishes, like to those make public feasts,
And not to please the cook's taste but the guests.

Yet if those cunning palates hither come,
They shall find guests' entreaty, and good room;
And though all relish not, sure there will be some

That when they leave their seats shall make them say,
Who wrote that piece, could so have wrote a play;
But that he knew this was the better way.

For, to present all custard or all tart,
And have no other meats to bear a part,
Or to want bread and salt, were but coarse art.

The poet prays you then, with better thought
To sit; and when his cates are all in brought,
Though there be none far-fet, there will dear-bought

Be fit for ladies: some for lords, knights, squires;
Some for your waiting-wench, and city-wires;
Some for your men, and daughters of Whitefriars.

Nor is it only while you keep your seat
Here that his feast will last; but you shall eat
A week at ord'naries on his broken meat.

 If his muse be true,
 Who commands her to you.

In the first three stanzas, it will be observed, the author is at pains, apparently, to dissociate himself from the high-brow dramatists of the day, and expresses himself frankly, as out for popularity,¹ and the tickling of the guests' palates rather than the cook's—a somewhat novel position for a university writer, especially when we remember that here, by implication, he includes, apparently, William Shakespeare, the non-university man, among those who write for the cook; though he is careful to point out that, but for his consciousness of the practical utility of this "better way," he could, an he would, have pleased the cunning palates too! On the whole, there is, he opines, something for everybody here; and—if I understand the cryptic close aright—plenty of broken meat left over, to discuss afterwards. There certainly is—the resultant relics of the feast, however, being at least as much Shakespeare's as Jonson's.

Then follows, in the printed editions, another prologue, written, no doubt, after the first performance, and running as follows:

The ends of all, who for the scene do write,
Are, or should be, to profit and delight.
And still 't hath been the praise of all best times,
So persons were not touched to tax the crimes.
Then in this play, which we present to-night,
And make the object of your ear and sight,
On forfeit of your selves, think nothing true:
Lest so you make the maker to judge you.
For he knows, poet never credit gained

¹Compare the passage in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, wherein Cordatus, who may stand, in part, for Shakespeare himself, says: "So this gallant, labouring to avoid popularity, falls into a habit of affectation, ten thousand times hatefuller than the former."

By writing truths, but things like truths, well feigned.
 If any yet will, with particular sleight
 Of application, wrest what he doth write;
 And that he meant, or him, or her, will say:
 They make a libel, which he made a play.

Quite evidently the town has been talking! This man is aimed at—and that woman; but, says Jonson, with regrettable, though characteristic lack of candour; "Do not believe a word of it. Morose is not the man you suppose him to be; nor are any of the others; so do not, I beg of you, assert the contrary, and make a libel which I made a play."

In a sense, as regards one of the characters, at any rate, Jonson spoke truth, because, though we have Dryden's authority for believing that Morose was actually drawn from life,¹ in *The Silent Woman*, he is unquestionably Malvolio, even, in part, to the letters of his name,² just as Clerimont is Duke Orsino; Sir Amorous, Sir Andrew; Otter, Sir Toby; Mistress Otter, Maria; the Silent Woman, Viola (transmuted); Lady Haughty, Olivia, and the Lady Collegiates, the Women of Olivia's court.

¹Dryden is "assured from divers persons that Jonson was actually acquainted with such a man, one altogether as ridiculous as he is here represented."—*Dramatic Essays*.

²Dryden asserts that Jonson took Morose from life; and Messrs. Herford and Simpson point out (II, 751) that he is also indebted, for the same character, to the Greek sophist, Libanius (314–390 A.D.), whose works, with Latin translation, were printed in Paris in 1606, and tell of "a surly man (Morosus in the Greek) who had married a talkative wife." Plautus, in *Casiro*, also provides a part of the plot—a fellow-slave, Chalinus, being substituted in marriage.

The editors of the latest edition of Jonson, while recognizing a part of their author's debt to *Twelfth Night*, and pointing out that the duel between Daw and La Foole (*Epi.*, IV, 5) is probably built on that of Aguecheek and Viola, hold that "it would be rash to say that Jonson owed anything to the rich comedy of Malvolio," though a note is inserted (II, 74) observing that, "a slight point of contact is that Morose is treated like a madman."

What Shakespeare thought of this second attempt, on Jonson's part, to profit from *Twelfth Night*, by imitating or burlesquing it, we do not know. He can hardly have been ignorant of it; though he may have been indifferent, and made light of the matter, as Jonson asserts that he was wont to do, when accused of having done the borrowing himself. This much seems to be certain; that acute playgoers, while enjoying the robust and humorous play that resulted, were making comparisons with *Twelfth Night*, which I, in my turn, will now proceed to do. We can begin, moreover, at the beginning, since Jonson's plagiarisms commence with the first line of his new play upon

Cler. Have you got the song yet perfect I gave you, boy?
which faintly echoes the first line of *Twelfth Night*:

If music be the food of love, play on.

Clerimont is then answered by the page—who, for the moment is Viola—"the welcomest thing under a man," at a certain mansion (Olivia's Court), that Clerimont wots of—to the effect that the dame in question, Lady Haughty (Olivia), had best not hear the song, lest it anger her; since he, the page, is—as Viola was—already the chosen favourite. To which Clerimont answers:

No marvel if the door be kept shut against your master,
when the entrance is so easy for you—

words that describe exactly the relative relations of Olivia, Viola, and the Duke, at the opening of *Twelfth Night*. There enters, at that moment, Truewit, the character whom Dryden considers to be Jonson's masterpiece, despite the fact that

slabs of his dialogue are borrowed, not from Shakespeare, but from the classics; "Witness the speeches in the first act, translated *verbatim* out of Ovid *de Arte Amandi*; to omit what afterwards he borrowed from the sixth satire of Juvenal against women." Truewit's opening speech concerning Clerimont, lifted from Ovid though it be, is, at the same time, in my judgment, a satire by Jonson himself—whom Truewit, of course, largely represents—upon the idle, languorous sensuality of Duke Orsino's surroundings.

Why, here's a man that can melt away his time and never feel it! What between his mistress abroad and his ingle at home, high fare, soft lodging, fine clothes, and his fiddle; he thinks the hours have no wings, or the days no post-horse.

Excepting an echo of Hamlet's comments upon old age, to Polonius, in Clerimont's

Grey heads and weak hams, moist eyes and shrunk members,

I do not observe any more obvious borrowings from Shakespeare, until Truewit describes

A new foundation, sir, here in the Town, of ladies, that call themselves the collegiates, an order between courtiers and country madams, that live from their husbands; and give entertainment to all the wits and braveries of the time, as they call them; cry down or up what they like or dislike in a brain or a fashion, with most masculine or rather hermaphroditical authority; and every day gain to their college some new probationer.

Cler. Who is the president?

True. The grave and youthful matron, the Lady Haughty.

Cler. A pox of her autumnal face, her pieced beauty! . . .

Now all this, I maintain, is a deliberate travesty, in part, perhaps, of the Princess and her companions, of *Love's Labour's Lost*, but primarily of Olivia's court, the last line quoted being Jonson's own distortion of Viola's "'Tis beauty truly blent"—already, as we have seen in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, a theme for Jonson's scorn—while the page's song, that follows, is upon the same idea, the Page singing Jonsonese for Viola:

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, is it to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace:
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Than all the adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

This really charming song gives Truewit occasion to philosophize in favour of judicious make-up. He is "clearly on the other side," and sees no virtue in unaided nature. "I love a good dressing," he says, "before any beauty o' the world. O, a woman is then like a delicate garden. . . Paint," urges he, "and profess it."

A feast is toward at the house of one Tom Otter "a kind of gamester" and given to cups, who "has had command by sea and land"—a hint of Shakespeare's Sea-captain here—but is at once recognizable, nevertheless, as he for whom the reader will

already have been looking out—namely, Sir Toby Belch.

The second act introduces Morose, who—however much he may have been fathered by an actual acquaintance of Jonson's, or by a classic writer—is, indubitably, Malvolio also, conceived as a gentleman who loves no noise, an idea which may have sprung, in part, from that strident midnight catch, in Olivia's kitchen, that we have all laughed over, and the righteous wrath provoked in Malvolio by their "gabbling like tinkers at this time of night." The first scene, however, in which Truewit warns Morose against following "this goblin Matrimony," though, probably, a counterblast against the pro-matrimonial discussions, and intentions, that occupy so many early pages of *Twelfth Night*, is mainly original Jonson, with only a phrase or two directly recalling Shakespeare—such as this line of Truewit's

The mysteries of writing letters, corrupting servants,
with

So she may kiss a page, or a smooth chin, that has the
despair of a beard.

which last phrase may hint at the beard that Viola was "almost sick for."

With the second scene, however, between Daw, Clerimont, Dauphine, and Epicœne, with Truewit interposing later, we are breathing again, unmistakably, the atmosphere of that same duologue between Viola and Olivia, in *Twelfth Night*, I, 5, with which Jonson has already made play, at the opening of his comedy.

Cler. He will suspect us; talk aloud. Pray, Mistress Epiccœne,¹ let's see your verses; we have Sir John Daw's leave; do not conceal your servant's merit, and your own glories.

Epi. They'll prove my servant's glories, if you have his leave so soon.

Daup. His vainglories, lady!

Daw. Show them, show them, mistress. I dare own them.

Epic. Judge you, what glories.

Daw. Nay, I'll read them myself too: an author must recite his own works. It is a madrigal of modesty.

All this dialogue, beyond question, with the verses that follow, recited by Dawe—

Modest and fair, for fair and good are near
Neighbours, however.

No noble virtue ever was alone,
But two in one.

Thus, when I praise sweet modesty, I praise,
Bright beauty's rays.

And having praised both beauty and modesty,
I have praised thee—

is inspired by, and forms a slightly mocking comment upon, Viola's speech, that was "poetical," and "excellently well penned." Says Viola:

Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn;

yet scorn was precisely what Jonson meant her to sustain; and there was, I imagine, many a laugh over it, at the "Mermaid", and other taverns, where the two rival authors had so often matched wit

¹Mistress Epiccœne has become a little bit the Duke, and also Viola, in place of the page, who stood for Viola at first. These substitutions and transformations will surprise no one who has followed me thus far. There are similar examples in *Every Man Out of His Humour* and *Sejanus*.

against wit. All this satire gives opening for more, upon the ignorance displayed by the unlettered, concerning classical authors, from the list of whom Jonson omits the name of Ovid, possibly because some of Truewit's talk has already been borrowed from him. Following this episode, the Viola-Olivia travesty continues, upon such lines as:

Cler. I muse a mistress can be so silent to the dotes of such a servant.

Daw. Nor is't a tale,
That female vice should be a virtue male,
Or masculine vice a female virtue be:
You shall it see
Proved with increase;
I know to speak, and she to hold her peace—

which is, I think, a veiled hit at Olivia's unnatural love for a woman; and, of course, in part, a parody of "She never told her love." Other parallels follow, unimportant in themselves, yet significant in their cumulative effect.

Daw. If you'll ask them *Viola.* And sing them loud,
aloud, you shall. even in the dead of night.

Geri. In the name of madness. *Maria.* In the name of jesting.

True. Lest by feigning to be a post. *Malv.* She'll stand at your door like a sheriff's post.

and Clerimont's:

Thus 'tis when a man will be ignorantly officious, do services, and know not his why—

might have been written of Malvolio. Throughout this scene (II, 2) of *The Silent Woman*, indeed, Jonson's mind is hovering continually over Olivia's

garden, as can be seen again, in this passage, which follows upon the entry of Cutbeard.

True. No, I was *ignorantly officious, impertinent*; this was the *absurd weak part*.¹

Cler. Wilt thou ascribe that to merit now, was mere fortune?

True. Fortune! mere providence. Fortune had not a finger in't—

none of which is far from Malvolio's "'Tis but fortune; all is fortune."

In scene three, Jonson, with considerable ingenuity, returns again to the theme of Viola's silence, and her previous ignorance of court life—all the conversations between Morose—who, for a while, becomes Orsino—and Epicœne, who is still Viola, being a delicate satire upon the Duke and his favourite page; as these detached passages, from Morose's lines, very clearly show.

Mor. Alas, lady, these answers by silent curtsies from you are too courtless and simple. I have ever had my breeding in court; and she that shall be my wife, must be accomplished with courtly and audacious ornaments. Can you speak, lady?

But can you naturally, lady . . . not taking pleasure in your tongue, which is a woman's chiefest pleasure, think plausible to answer me by silent gestures, so long as my speeches jump right with what you conceive? . . . Dear lady, I am courtly, I tell you, and I must have my ears banqueted with pleasant and witty conferences, pretty girds, scoffs, and dalliance with her that I mean to choose for my bed-phere. . . .

Admirable creature! I will trouble you no more. I

¹*Italics* not mine.

will not sin against so sweet a simplicity. . . . (to Cutbeard) she's poor and her friends deceased.

There are more parallels here, the last quoted line being apparently a shot aimed at the impoverished condition in which Viola arrives at the court of Illyria, and the supposed death of her brother, Sebastian.

With the next scene (II, 4) as the plot thickens, to get Morose married to the Silent Woman, the talk, in which the jest is upheld, equally echoes *Twelfth Night*, as may be seen from these brief extracts.

Cutbeard. He does triumph in his felicity, admires the party. *Malv.* I thank my stars I am happy. (II, 5)

Dauph. I am for you, for any device of vexation. *Sir To.* Excellent, I smell a device. (II, 3)

The third act of *Epicoene* acquaints us, from the beginning, a little more fully, with Tom Otter, otherwise Sir Toby, who enters, with his "cups" and his wife, the last mentioned being also recognizable as Shakespeare's Maria, who, in *Twelfth Night*, it will be remembered, becomes Lady Toby at the end of the play, though she is no more than Olivia's waiting-woman at its beginning. The opening lines of the dialogue run thus:

Otter. Nay, good princess, hear me *pauca verba*.

Mrs. Ott. By that light, I'll have you chained up, with your bull-dogs and bear dogs, if you be not civil the sooner.

Here his "good princess," and her protest against Otter's bear-yard manners, at once recall Olivia, and her expostulations to Sir Toby, as being:

Fit for the mountains and the barbarous caves,
Where manners ne'er were preached.

In the dialogue that follows, between Truewit, Mrs. Otter, Clerimont, and Dauphine, the last-named echoes Sir Andrew—

That youth's a rare courtier. "Rain odours," well!—

Mrs. Otter, for the purpose of Jonson's scene, being transformed, momentarily, from Maria into Viola. The passage runs thus.

Dauph. What an excellent choice phrase this lady expresses in.

True. O, sir, she is the only authentical courtier, that is not naturally bred one, in the city.

Mrs. Ott. You have taken that report upon trust, gentlemen.

True. No, I assure you, the court governs it so, lady, in your behalf.

Mrs. Ott. I am the servant of the court and courtiers, sir.

True. They are rather your idolaters.—

the origin of all which is obvious, though the remainder of the scene has not very much unoriginal stuff, saving that the emulation and quarrel, adumbrated between La Foole and Daw, and the projected flattery of both—

They'll believe themselves to be just such men as we make them, neither more nor less—

is just an inversion of the trick of talking up their opposites, that Sir Toby and Fabian practice, preliminary to the duel between Sir Andrew and Viola.

Scene two brings us back to Morose's house, so that we may as well be on the alert, at once, for

adaptations from Malvolio, which, in fact, we find, no later than the third line, spoken by Morose:

It is fit that we should thank fortune, double to nature, for any benefit she confers upon us.

which is straight from the garden scene—" 'Tis but fortune; all is fortune. . . . Jove, I thank thee! . . . Jove and my stars be praised! " etc. Cutbeard's first speech, moreover, smells of Olivia's kitchen, and its revellers—

He got this cold with sitting up late, and singing catches with cloth-workers:

And after the entrance of Mute, we get, from Epicœne, an amusing prophetic utterance of what, in Jonson's opinion, no doubt, Viola's attitude towards her duke was likely to be, after but a brief experience of married life, with so languorous, emotional, and self-centred a dilettante as was Orsino.

Epic. Speak to him, fellow, speak to him! I'll have none of this coacted unnatural dumbness in my house, in a family where I govern.

Mor. She is my regent already! I have married a Penthesilea,¹ a Semiramis; sold my liberty to a distaff.

The whole passage, and especially the adjective "unnatural," expresses exactly Jonson's attitude towards the romantic, sentimental drama of Shakespeare; and who shall say that, from the common-sense point of view, he is wholly wrong! The scene, as a whole, is certainly one of the most direct satires upon Shakespeare contained either

¹A famous Amazon queen. Sir Toby applies the name to Maria "Good night, Penthesilia."—(*Twelfth Night*, II, 3.)

in *Epicæne* or in *Every Man Out of His Humour*; Truewit's speech to Morose, concerning his marriage hour, continues the satire, thus:

Would you go to bed so presently, sir, afore noon? a man of your head and hair should owe more to that reverend ceremony. . . . Those delights are to be steeped in the humour and silence of the night—

all of which, of course, is a jibe at Malvolio's "day-bed where I have left Olivia sleeping." The dialogue, after the entry of Lady Haughty, and the other lady Collegiates, remains extremely interesting and suggestive. To what extent it is just an obvious parody of Viola, without malice behind it, and to what extent, if any, it is a deliberate attack upon Viola's creator, each reader must determine for himself.

The following passage in *Epicæne* (III, 2) is the next to claim attention.

Hau. Is this the Silent Woman?

Cen. Nay, she has found her tongue since she was married, Master Truewit says.

Hau. O, Master Truewit! 'save you. What kind of creature is your bride here? she speaks, methinks!

True. Yes, madam, believe it, she is a gentlewoman of very absolute behaviour, and of a good race.¹

Hay. And Jack Daw told us she could not speak!

True. So it was carried in plot, madam, to put her upon this old fellow, by Sir Dauphine, his nephew, and one or two more of us; but she is a woman of an excellent assurance, and an extraordinary happy wit and tongue. You shall see her make rare sport with Daw ere night.

¹*Oliv.* What is your parentage?

Viola. Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:

I am a gentleman.—(*Twelfth Night*, I, 5.)

Hau. And hath he brought us to laugh at her!

True. That falls out often, madam, that he that thinks himself the master-wit, is the master-fool. I assure your ladyship, ye cannot laugh at her.

Hau. No, we'll have her to the college. An she have wit, she shall be one of us, shall she not, Centaur? we'll make her a collegiate.

A careful study of these lines, read in connection with what has gone before, will, I think, lead generally to the conclusion that here is a skit upon Viola and Olivia, beneath which—not excluding the master-fool phrase—was veiled a gibe at Shakespeare even more apparent and pointed to an Elizabethan audience than it is to us.

The parallels continue, as before. Morose's:

O, it was too miraculously good to last!—

ostensibly in appreciation of the collegiates' consideration for his pet infirmity—inability to endure noise—is still in the Viola-baiting mood; and I hope that I am not stretching surmise too far, when I suggest that Haughty's speech:

How much plate have you lost to-day (if you had but regarded your profit), what gifts, what friends, through your mere rusticity—

may, possibly, be a reference—understood as such by the audience at the time—to Shakespeare's withdrawal to Stratford, which, if it did, in fact, take place in this year 1609 may have emboldened Jonson to make more free with *Twelfth Night* than otherwise he would have cared to do; just as it may also have encouraged Wilkins, when writing *Pericles*, to take those astonishing liberties with

Shakespearean drama, which we shall consider in a later chapter.¹

Later on Truewit says:

Go to, know your friends, and such as love you,
which may, then, have had a double meaning; but certainly, the closing passages of the act, after the entry of Clerimont with the musicians, is a sort of prelude to the coming travesty—in Act IV—upon the kitchen scene in *Twelfth Night*, with a gibe also at "Patience on a monument."

True. . . . Mock down all their attemptings with patience;
'tis but a day, and I would suffer heroically. Should an ass exceed me in fortitude? no. You betray your infirmity with your hanging dull ears, and make them insult: bear us bravely, and constantly.

The closing lines, of the same speech, hint, I think, at Maria's (Mistress Otter's) appearance towards the close of the "we three" revel.

A wedding dinner come, and a knight-sewer before it, for the more reputation: and fine mistress Otter, your neighbour, in the rump or tail of it.

And this passage also is, perhaps, an echo of "the wittiest piece of Eve's flesh as any's in Illyria."

Gen. How like you her wit, Mavis?

Mav. Very prettily, absolutely well.

Mrs. Ott. 'Tis my place.

Mav. You shall pardon me, Mistress Otter.

Mrs. Ott. Why, I am a collegiate.

Mav. But not in ordinary.

¹Shakespeare, however, may have given his consent; as the play first appeared with his name as author. See p. 186.

Then, while the drums and trumpets are sounding, Otter, who has brought with him his bull, bear, and horse, otherwise his cups, chimes in:

And we will have a rouse¹ in each of them anon—an intention that we have heard put in similar words, by Sir Toby (*Twelfth Night*, II, 3). As for the three O's, twice repeated by Morose, Jonson here borrows again the motive he has used already in *Every Man Out of His Humour*:

Mal. . . . A should follow but O does.

Fab. And O shall end, I hope.

Sir T. Ay, or I'll cudgel him, and make him cry O!

Act IV continues the theme of the tormented bridegroom; and Sir Dauphine's first lines:

O, hold me up a little, I shall go away in the jest else.
He has got on his whole nest of night-caps

are a recast of Maria's (*Twelfth Night*, III, 2):

If you desire the spleen, and will laugh yourselves into stitches, follow me. Yon gull, Malvolio, is turned head. . . He's in yellow stockings.

There, again, is direct imitation; but, as I understand it, the underlying point of this first scene, up to Otter's entrance, with Daw and La Foole, is another attack by Jonson, from the mouth of Truewit—who voices the author throughout this play—upon the romantic conception of womanhood. Upon the face of it, Truewit is lecturing Clerimont, who, from the beginning, has stood, to some extent, for Duke Orsino; and, behind Orsino, the author

¹Cf. Sir T. "Shall we rouse the night owl in a catch?"—(*Twelfth Night*, II, 3.)

is attacking Orsino's creator, Shakespeare, precisely in the same way that we have seen him doing so, when, in the second scene of the first act of *Sejanus*, he makes Sejanus and Eudemus discuss Livia's beauty, and the power of "physic" to increase it. Truewit's first long speech—

Believe it, I told you right. Women ought to repair the losses time and years have made in their features, with dressings. And an intelligent woman, if she know by herself the least defect, will be most curious to hide it: and it becomes her—

is, to my thinking, a deliberate challenge to the Viola-Olivia point of view:

'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on—

a passage which, as well as in *Sejanus*, has already been attacked in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, and in Act I, Scene I, of this *Silent Woman*. "Beauty," infers the matter-of-fact Jonson, "may be truly blent, when the maid is young, or it may not. If it be not, let the woman, especially if she be ageing, do all she possibly can to make art triumph over nature;" which, in fact, though they may not be over ready to admit it, is exactly what the average woman has done, and always will do. Truewit continues, in a strain of sweet reasonableness:

I love measure in the feet, and number in the voice: they
are gentlenesses that often draw no less than the face:

and Dauphine's reply:

How cam'st thou to study these creatures so exactly? I
would thou would'st make me a proficient

is, I think, a jibe at Orsino's knowledge of women, as displayed in his duologues with Viola; and, at the same time, by inference, a mild example of Jonsonian self-flattery. The two following long speeches, by Truewit, continue the theme, and support the Jonsonian argument, that Orsino's failure to break through Olivia's defences is unnatural, and, therefore, bad art. Take these lines, for illustration:

A man should not doubt to overcome any woman. Think he can vanquish them, and he shall:¹ for though they deny, their desire is to be tempted. Penelope herself cannot hold out long.

When Clerimont, continuing the discussion, has deprecated force, suggesting that "all women are not to be taken all ways," Jonson, again through the mouth of Truewit, takes occasion, in a speech of some forty lines, to lecture his audience upon the various wiles that will lead infallibly to success with the sex, especially upholding cunning, as being "above cost." One of his last lines, before the tenour of the scene changes, is

Men should love wisely all women: some for the face and so forth, not unwisely, and uniquely, as Shakespeare's Orsinos, and other of his romantic heroes, usually imagine themselves to do.

The entry of Otter, Day, and La Foole, and the noisy drinking bout, that follows, is, of course, a travesty of the revel scene of *Twelfth Night*. Truewit's "Low, low, Captain," echoing Sir Toby's,

¹The idea here is Shakespearean: "Nothing is but thinking makes it so."

"Higher! ha, ha, excellent!" (*Twelfth Night*, I, 3); and La Foole's, "As I am knight," Sir Andrew's "As I am true knight"; while Otter's "Nunc est bibendum" is, obviously, a latinized version of "What is the properest day to drink?" a ditty which, though not, I think, in the text of *Twelfth Night*, is usually and, I suppose, traditionally, sung by Sir Toby, and his companions, in the kitchen scene. The reference in *The Silent Woman* suggests that Jonson had seen and heard it thus sung. Morose's entrance, I need hardly say, corresponds with Malvolio's intrusion upon the revellers; and it is worth noting that Otter's remark:

A wife is a scurvy clogdogdo, an unlucky thing—
seems to harp still upon the anti-romantic, anti-Shakespearean theme, though Jonson, nevertheless, does not disdain continuously to lift Shakespeare's dialogue, as in Otter's:

She has a peruke that, like a pound of hemp, made up in shoe-threads—

which, no doubt, echoes again Sir Toby's comment, upon Sir Andrew's head of hair:

Excellent; it hangs like flax on a distaff.

The closing line of the scene, spoken by Truewit, of Otter, may be a covert criticism of Shakespeare's handling of Sir Toby:

His humour is as tedious at last as it was ridiculous at first—
and the opening of the next scene (*Epicæne*, IV, 2) affords another obvious parallel between Mrs. Otter, upon Morose, and Maria upon Malvolio (*Twelfth Night*, III, 4). These are the passages:

Mrs. Ott. O lord, madam, he came down with a huge long naked weapon in both his hands, and looked so dreadfully! sure he's beside himself.

Maria. He's coming, madam, but in a very strange manner. He is sure possessed, madam.

Mrs. Otter's next speech, and Daw's answer to it, viewed in the light of what has gone before, have, possibly, more significance than at once meets the eye:

Mrs. Ott. Alas, Mistress Mavis, I was chastising my subject, and thought nothing of him. (Morose.)

Daw. Faith, mistress, you must do so too: learn to chastise. Mistress Otter corrects her husband so he dare not speak, but under correction.

Here Jonson also, I think, "was chastising his subject, and thought nothing of him"; and is intimating the desirability that others, though less gifted than himself, in that direction, should set aside sentimentality, and learn also to do likewise.

The attack upon the chary Olivian attitude proceeds, with Lady Haughty's:

Why should women deny their favours to men? are they the poorer or the worse?

and with this, from the same lady, a few lines lower down:

Besides, ladies should be mindful of the approach of age, and let no time want his due use. The best of our days pass first—

Jonson, I think, here compressing, very adroitly, into those last seven words, the central idea of that oft-quoted couplet, spoken by the Duke (*Twelfth Night*, II, 4):

For women are as roses, whose fair flower
Being once displayed, doth fall that very hour;

and it is quite in keeping with Jonson's utilitarian, matter-of-fact, though quite cynical, attitude, throughout this play, that he makes Epicœne refer to:

Those excellent receipts to keep yourselves from the bearing of children—

the use, or abuse, of which arouses much controversy and searching of hearts to-day.

Meanwhile, throughout the scene, the sneers and the plagiarisms continue. When Morose says: Nay I would sit out a play that was nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and target,

Jonson is girding, I think, at the romantic oversea dramas, popular at that time upon our stage, including *Troilus and Cressida*, "mouldy *Pericles*," and, perhaps, the alarms and excursions of the closing scenes of *Macbeth*. A little farther on, the madness of Morose echoes that of Malvolio, in phraseology, which, almost certainly, is another dig at "patience on a monument," and her green and yellow melancholy.

Epic. Look how idly he talks, and how his eyes sparkle! he looks green about the temples! do you see what blue spots he has!

Cler. Ay, 'tis melancholy.

Haughty opines, at this point, that the only way to cure Morose of his dejection, is to "talk divinity to him, or moral philosophy,"¹ whereupon La Foole recommends a devotional tract of

¹Cf. Feste to Malvolio: "There is no darkness but ignorance."

the time, *Doni's Philosophy*,¹ thus giving Jonson opportunity to make more play, as between the moderns and the ancients, Haughty citing a case of a cure by means of "Sick Man's Salve," and another by Greene's *Groats-worth of Wit*,² which Truewit describes as "a very cheap cure," adding that his father and mother every night read themselves to sleep upon those books.

The remainder of this act consists mainly of a spirited working out, by Jonson, of what Truewit describes as "a tragi-comedy between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, Daw and La Foole," imitated wholly from the duel between Viola and Sir Andrew, in *Twelfth Night*, as the following extracts, taken almost at random, are sufficient to prove:

True. So offended a wight as Sir Amorous did I never see or hear of. For taking away his guests, sir, to-day, that's the cause; and he declares it behind your back with such threatenings and contempts—

Daw. I'll give him any satisfaction, sir—but fighting.

True. Blood he thirsts for, and blood he will have. . . I never knew a man's choler so high

True. There was never fencer challenged at so many several foils. You would think he meant to murder all St. Pulchre's parish he seems so implacably enraged.

La Foo. Batter! if he dare, I'll have an action of battery against him.³

¹By Thomas Becon.

²The book which attacks Shakespeare as "upstart crow," etc.

³This is *Aguecheek* verbatim, though in *The Silent Woman* the word "battery" is cleverly applied, not to La Foole's person, but to the door behind which he has been hiding.

True. I told him you were a knight and a scholar.

Those passages, together with the whole atmosphere and conduct of the scene, have the same original source; yet, all the time, in my judgment, Jonson is girding at the characters of his models, as portrayed by Shakespeare—notably in such a passage as this, about one hundred lines or so from the close of IV, 2:

True. Did I not tell thee, *Dauphine!* Why, all these actions (*i.e.*, *the characters of Twelfth Night*) are governed by crude opinion, without reason or cause; they know not why they do anything; but as they are informed, believe, judge, praise, condemn, love, hate, and in emulation one of another, do all these things alike. Only they have a natural inclination sways them generally to the worst, when they are left to themselves. But pursue it, now thou hast them.

The last sentence of this speech, seems to bear the meaning: "Now that I have given you your cue, follow up my idea, and see whether I am not right"—which, from Jonson's own view-point, was unquestionably the case.

Truewit's next speech is notable, wherein he compares the coming interview and reconciliation of the two duellists—hidden each in a closet upon opposite sides of the stage—with the interview of the two friends, Orestes and Pylades, the half-insane Grecian prince, and his inseparable, who are the Hellenic representatives of Hamlet and Horatio—the latter standing for the personification of winter, as an outcome of primitive nature-myth tragedy,¹ by that time identified with

¹Shakespeare, no doubt, did not consciously realize this fact. *Hamlet*, to him, was simply a drama of revenge.

established Greek literary drama. Dauphine's speech, which follows:

Noble ladies, do not confess in your countenance, or outward bearing to them, any discovery of their follies, that we may see how they will bear up again, with what assurance and erection—

may possibly have had more meaning to Jonson than to all his hearers or readers; and, to show that he had *Twelfth Night* in mind, right to the end of the act, I would point out that Truewit's words to Morose: "To think how you are abused," are taken from Olivia's line, concerning Malvolio: "He hath been most notoriously abused"—(*Twelfth Night*, V, 1).

The fifth act continues the same method; and Mavis's intention, expressed early in the first scene:

"to write out a riddle in Italian for Sir Dauphine to translate—"

hints at more secret satire to come; while there is, perhaps, also a second meaning in Lady Haughty's:

Sir, I can distinguish gems from pebbles—

as also in her:

Then you (Sir Dauphine) are a friend to truth, sir; it makes me love you the more.

But it is not until after the second entry of Mavis, that Jonson returns pointedly to his underlying theme with Clerimont's question, concerning the Collegiates—Olivia and her court—

Cler. How now, Dauphine? how dost thou quit thyself of these females?

Dau. 'Slight, they haunt me like fairies, and give me jewels here; I cannot be rid of them.

Cler. O, you must not tell though.

Day. Mass, I forgot that: I was never so assaulted. One loves for virtue, and bribes me with this [*shows the jewel*]—another loves me with caution, and so would possess me; a third brings me a riddle here: and all are jealous, and rail at each other.

Cler. A riddle! pray let me see it. [*Reads.*]

Sir Dauphine, I choose this way of intimation for privacy. The ladies here, I know, have both hope and purpose to make a collegiate and servant of you. If I might be so honoured as to appear at any end of so noble a work, I would enter into a fame of taking physic tomorrow, and continue it four or five days, or longer, for your visitation. MAVIS."

By my faith, a subtle one! Call you this a riddle? what's their plain dealing, trow?

Dau. We do lack Truewit to tell us that.

Many lines, in this interesting passage, seem to me to be full of point and meaning, especially the riddle, addressed to Sir Dauphine, who has just been complaining that he cannot get rid of the Collegiate women. Mark especially those first three riddling lines.

I choose this way of intimation for privacy. The ladies, here, I know, have both hope and purpose to make a collegiate and servant of you.

and so forth. Now this seems to me to be a deliberate, though veiled, appeal to the understanding of the intellectuals among his audience; Clerimont saying, in effect: "The author and the knowing ones here understand one another, and can com-

municate our ideas secretly, under cover of the play."

Truewit enters, soon after, followed by Otter and Cutbeard, disguised respectively as a divine¹ and a canon lawyer, whom Truewit addresses as follows:

Come, master doctor, and master parson, look to your parts now, and discharge them bravely; you are well set forth, perform it as well. If you chance to be out, do not confess it with standing still, or humming, or gaping at one another; but go on, and talk aloud and eagerly; use vehement action, and only remember your terms, and you are safe. Let the matter go where it will: you have many will do so. But at first be very solemn and grave, like your garments, though you loose yourselves after, and skip out like a brace of jugglers on a table.

One can never be certain absolutely of underlying intention; but I believe that the latter half of this speech, from "go on, and talk aloud," is another intended hit at Shakespeare's inconsistent handling of the *Twelfth Night* story, which, at first, is very "solemn and grave," but loses itself, after, in merriment, as the vitality of the secondary figures—Sir Toby, Malvolio, and the rest—grew in Shakespeare's mind, and the comic secondary plot, in consequence, developed a prominence that almost thrust aside the primary, and serious, romantic theme.²

¹An imitation of Feste disguised as Sir Topaz.

²Mr. H. Granville-Barker has somewhere expressed the opinion that when Shakespeare began to write *Twelfth Night* he had a tragedy in mind, but was turned from it by delight in his humorous characters, as they grew into the play. The idea is interesting, but it does not, I think, take enough account of the period, close to *As You Like It*, in which *Twelfth Night* seems to have been written. The tragedies came after, not before, the failure of the Essex conspiracy.

Much of the dialogue that follows, between Morose and the sham parson and lawyer—a travesty, of course, of the corresponding scene with Malvolio—is too indelicate to admit of free discussion in print; but I may be allowed to point out that Otter's, "Are we not all brothers and sisters?" is, perhaps, another hit at the marry-them-all-off method adopted by Shakespeare, at the close of *Twelfth Night*, while the eighth impediment, touching the taking of holy orders by a woman, and Morose's:

Would she would go into a nunnery yet,
conceivably pokes fun at Olivia:

But like a cloistress will she veiled walk—

and possibly at Ophelia, too. Truewit, soon after, delivers himself of another cynical line, which I will not quote, quite in the usual Jonsonian vein, concerning married women; and the same speaker's

Matrimonium! we shall have most unmatrimonial Latin with you: *matrimonia*, and be hanged.

I suppose to be a jibe at Shakespeare's lack of scholarship, the "little Latin and less Greek," of which we have heard before. One other scrap of dialogue, in this scene, interests me. It is:

Cutbeard. You shall pardon me, master parson, I can prove it.

Otter. You can prove a will, master doctor. You can prove nothing else—

words by which, maybe, Jonson—unwilling to be too plainly transparent—would convey to those hearers, who, by this time, are almost persuaded of

the plagiarisms and inner drift of this play, a reminder that suspicion is much more easy than proof—wise counsel, that the writer of this book has endeavoured continuously to bear in mind; though Jonson forgot to add the corollary recognized by our British law and procedure, that—provided no other truth can be established, to controvert them, and thus break the chain—an accumulation of facts and inferences all pointing one way, may establish proof, by what is called circumstantial evidence.

At the close of Epicœne's speech, after his hurried entrance, come three lines, of which a part of the scorn may well have been intended, secretly, for the audience:

If you had blood or virtue in you, gentlemen, you would not suffer such earwigs about a husband, or scorpions to creep between man and wife.

Not until a hundred lines or so before the end of the play, do I find much else calling for comment; but I suspect that here, at the close—following upon his "no proof" hint—Jonson is ready to put on the scornful magnanimous, as in Dauphine's speech:

Sir, I must speak to you I have been long your poor despised kinsman, and many a hard thought has strengthened you against me: but now it shall appear if either I love you or your peace, and prefer them to all the world beside.

There may be a touch of symbolism, also, in pulling the false beards and gowns from Doctor Cutbeard and Parson Otter; such, I take it, being exactly the kind of process which Jonson, in this play, be-

lieved himself to be applying to the characters of *Twelfth Night*, for the amusement and enlightenment of contemporary playgoers. The last lines of *The Silent Woman*, spoken by Truewit:

Spectators, if you like this comedy, rise cheerfully, and now Morose is gone in, clap your hands. It may be that noise will cure him, at least please him—

suggest that the part of Morose may have been played by Jonson himself.

CHAPTER VIII

"*TWELFTH NIGHT*" AND "*EPICÆNE*"— (continued)

A short consideration of Jonson's character, his relations with Shakespeare, and his attitude towards Shakespeare's art, seen in the light of the preceding examination of *The Silent Woman*.

HAVING now run through the list of more striking parallels in the two plays, I propose to make such comments as these naturally evoke; the first of them being admiration for the extreme ingenuity with which Jonson, while at once closely imitating, and neatly travestying, Shakespeare's men and women, has, by transmuting and inverting the characters, given them a new and individual life of their own; and thus twisted the text of *Twelfth Night* into a wholly different, and, in a sense, quite original play. He has, in fact, done, after his own peculiar fashion, the very thing that Shakespeare did inimitably with other, and lesser dramatists. In *The Silent Woman* Jonson shows a technical mastery over construction, and characterization, far in advance of his clumsy attempt with *Every Man Out of His Humour*, written some ten years before.

Did he, or did he not, wish the truth to be discovered? Judging from the transparent likeness, in name and character, between those two "knights of the braveries, though they be none of the wits," Sir Andrew Aguecheek, and Sir Amorous La

Foole, one would say that he cared very little how soon he was found out; but—as the prologue, the motto, and the letter to his patron, Sir Francis Stuart, all clearly show—Jonson was politic enough to realize the importance of being able to save his face, before the eyes of the world. So long as that was done, he was satisfied; and, while it is probable that his over-weening vanity secretly protested against public exhibition of the unescapable plagiarisms upon which his restricted imagination and lack of original inventive faculty, necessarily threw him back, he was more than willing, at heart, to be recognized as the man who was teaching Shakespeare his job. That desire may explain why he kept recognizably, here and there, to Shakespearean dialogue; his purpose being, perhaps, to show to the intellectuals among his audience, who were following, and enjoying, the play within the play, that, while adhering, for his model, to one typical comedy, it was always Shakespeare himself, and the romantic school, that he was attacking—achieving thereby the double stroke, of proving, in one tour-de-force, his skill both as dramatist and satirist too. And who will deny that, while powerless to deprive us moderns of one wistful smile, or delighted sigh, over *Twelfth Night*, Jonson has, nevertheless, within his range, succeeded admirably in what he set out to do.

The man's inherent, rationalistic anti-romanticism supplies, in my judgment, the key to a full comprehension of this play. Even in its very title we can detect an idea which Jonson, I suppose, would have expressed in some such words as

these: "Shakespeare has drawn a quite unnatural Silent Woman, Viola, who never told her love. I will give you a much more authentic Silent Woman, who also never told her love, for the reason that, being no woman, she had none." He then proceeds to create that lady, making her, instead of a woman disguised as a man, a man disguised as a woman. Thus the play is contrived, about a series of characters most of whom, in one way or another, are made to ridicule Shakespeare's romanticism, as being false and unreal, whether it be Olivia's "beauty truly blent," or—to Jonson's sceptical mind—the equally ridiculous assumption, that the countess, or indeed any other woman, was proof against a man's advances—a belief summed up in Truewit's line, "A man should not doubt to overcome any woman."

What the advanced feminists of to-day would think of such assumptions, we can guess. In that regard they will be Shakespeareans all; yet Jonson, unquestionably, was an honest disbeliever in the resisting power of women against men; and herein I agree wholly with Messrs. Herford and Simpson, when they speak of Jonson's "cynical mistrust and disparagement of the sex at large," and point out that in his poems, the beautiful morning hymn to the Countess of Bedford is in close company with an epigram "which suggests in the plainest terms that all women are harlots."

Jonson's mind was, in certain of its qualities, a curiously modern one; and some readers may have already noted that several topics raised by him are topical to-day, among a generation that, also, has discarded romanticism. Press discus-

sions upon artificial birth-control, and public feminine performances, with powder-puff and lipstick, remind one, frequently, of Ben's ideas upon these subjects. As for "She never told her love," and the other charming sentimental delicacies of Viola, I am reminded that, not long ago, a shrewd young actress, who knows *Twelfth Night* well, but, quite possibly, has never so much as heard of *The Silent Woman*, informed me that Viola ruled the Duke with a rod of iron, within six months of their marriage! Nor did I venture to contradict her.

What Jonson did not see—and could never discern in his musings over and dissections of Shakespeare's work—was, that in such a play as *Twelfth Night*, set in an idyllic land of Illyria, playgoers were taken, intentionally, out of this breathing world of actuality, into one of fantasy and illusion, wherein the characters, accordingly, though always human and consistent, are fantastically conceived, and behave, not according to dictates of strict logic, or of rigid psychological law—if such there be—but as whimsically, almost, as the fairies do, in that enchanted wood near Athens. Could anything any longer astonish, in us mysterious children of men, it would be an astonishing thing that an individual so generally acute as was Jonson, along certain lines of apprehension, should be, at the same time, so stupid or so perverse along others: yet it is greatly to his credit—and the recognition would have pleased him—that his own plays do, in fact, give us what he so laboriously claimed for them—a truer, because unidealized, picture of Elizabethan life than anything that we

owe to Shakespeare: but that very matter-of-factness brought with it its own limitation; and its consequence was that, excepting in masques, Jonson was never able to escape from the thralldom of realism, nor to take wing to any poetical wonder-world, into which future generations of men and women would lovingly follow him.

The Silent Woman seems to have been one of Jonson's most successful comedies; and it is interesting to place oneself imaginatively in one of the galleries of the Elizabethan theatre in which this comedy was played in the year 1609—not, I would suggest, for the first performance, which was by the Children of Her Majesty's Revels, at a private playhouse—but at some later occasion, when London playgoers—who must have been perfectly familiar with *Twelfth Night*—had got wind of the satire, and went to *The Silent Woman* with the sure hope of getting at least as much fun, or at any rate interest, from the inner as from the outer play. To the mass of the groundlings, swarming in the yard below—if the comedy, this time, were in a public, and not a private theatre—the play, of course, is the thing. They have come to see a rousing good bit of virile humour, by honest Ben Jonson; and—though many may have recognized, here and there, a tag or two from *Twelfth Night*—they looked no farther than to the surface story for their amusement; possibly without suspecting that anything of genuine interest lay behind.

With the intellectuals, and some of the aristocracy, however—all thoroughly familiar with the crafty Elizabethan dramatic method, of wrapping

play within play, the entertainment would be a two-sided thing—rattling comedy upon the surface, and, beneath, a bitter, though veiled, satire upon the playwright whose dramatic power, grasp of character, sense of beauty and of humour, exquisite fancy, and superb command over the potential harmonies of his native tongue, had been filling the Globe theatre for years, and building up for himself, at last, a measure of fame, and fortune too.

The Silent Woman, we may assume, was received, at many points, by many of those present, with delighted chuckles, that the mob—but dimly conscious of any significance subtler than the apparent one—would put down to the obvious humours of Otter, La Foole, or Morose; so that, when Clerimont, coming down stage, with the audience upon three sides of him, read to his companions the riddle already quoted, the knowing ones in the galleries, I imagine, would have interpreted its first three lines somewhat in this fashion:

"I choose this way of intimation for privacy," *i.e.*, the knowing ones among you, and myself the author, understand one another; and I can communicate my ideas to you secretly, under cover of the play. "The ladies, here, I know, both hope and purpose to make a collegiate and servant of you," *i.e.*, Shakespeare's unnatural, romantic women are popular with many of you; and they hope and intend to draw you into their circle; but we, of the rational school, know better.

These lines by Clerimont, which follow soon after, have the same cynical, sceptical Jonsonian double meaning:

I would not give a fly's leg in the balance against all the women's reputations here, if they could but be thought to speak truth. . . .

or, in other words, that these difficult Olivias and dumbly, irrationally, faithful Violas, are not, in Jonson's view, true to life. He is yet again, in fact, harping upon his rationalistic obsession, which we have heard him dinning, at frequent intervals, into his audiences throughout three long plays, and which, the question of erudition and Latinity apart, forms the substance of his dramatic quarrel with Shakespeare.

Here we bring to an end our examination of Ben Jonson's methods with Shakespeare. That I have carried all my readers with me, all the way, and in every conclusion and inference, is scarcely to be hoped: but that criticism will destroy my proofs of Jonson's borrowings, I do not, for one instant, suppose. The case, I submit, is made out; and, as is common enough with Jonson's writings, his own words, from *Discoveries*,¹ become applicable to himself.

Some, by a . . . false venditation of their own naturals think to divert the sagacity of their readers from themselves, and cool the scent of their own foxlike thefts; when yet they are so rank, as a man may find whole pages together usurped from one author.

And perhaps these also:²

It is a barbarous envy, to take from those men's virtues which, because thou canst not arrive at, thou impotently despairst to imitate.

¹Temple Edition, p. 39. ²Temple Edition, p. 17.

Most strange and paradoxical is the character of Jonson, as it shapes itself to the writer of these pages. A man of versatile talent is this Asper, of genius almost, monumentally assiduous, a great lover of learning, and so crammed with erudition, and with other men's thoughts, that his own native imagination is stifled and distorted beneath the mass of them, and his style permanently stiffened, for want of space in which to attain flexibility. "I can repeat whole books that I have read," he tells us;¹ and the insistence² of those books, in his own consciousness, seems to have turned him, perforce, into an imitator, especially of Shakespeare, after whom, as we have seen, he toiled in vain emulation, knowing well, at heart, his rival's supremacy, yet making strenuous though unavailing efforts to disprove a conviction, that self-love and jealousy would allow him neither to acknowledge nor admit. Wide enough neither in vision nor in sympathy, fully to understand Shakespeare's might, he did, at last, in calmer years, nobly recognize the greatness, and permanence, of the aforetime rival, whom he loved "as much as any this side idolatry"; but, as Swinburne has pointed out—and as the foregoing chapters, I hope, have emphasized—the utmost exertion of our charity is needed to forgive the condescending patronage of Shakespeare, expressed in such a line as, "There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned."³ No writer, that ever lived, was more easily self-

¹ Temple Edition, p. 137.

² "We so insist in imitating others that, as we cannot when it is necessary return to ourselves."—*Ibid.*, *De Vita Humana*, p. 56.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

deceived than Jonson; nor do I know of one whose writings can be turned more easily against or towards himself. To himself, far more than to him of whom it was written, the line last above quoted is applicable.

CHAPTER IX

THE AUTHORSHIP OF "PERICLES"

Argues that *Pericles*, a popular romantic play, first published under Shakespeare's name—though rejected from the First Folio—was not in fact, written by Shakespeare, but by Wilkins, from his own novel upon the same subject, filled out with scenes and lines deliberately imitated from Shakespeare—the "scraps out of every dish" contemptuously referred to by Jonson, when writing of *Pericles*.

Shows how *Julius Caesar*, *Richard II*, *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, and *Twelfth Night* are, in turn, borrowed from by Wilkins, and were by him cleverly manipulated to convey a general impression that Shakespeare was substantially the author of the play.

READERS may perhaps remember that, in a previous chapter, when summarizing the attacks that seem to have been made upon Shakespeare, by the University men, in the year 1609, I tried also to account, in part, for the number of doubtful plays which appeared under his name, about that time, giving, as possible reasons, Shakespeare's fatigue, or ill-health, or indifference—the last of these, if one of the true causes, being due, probably, to his actual or impending retirement, in that year, from London to Stratford-upon-Avon. Among the doubtful plays mentioned was *Pericles*, which will form the subject of this chapter.

Mr. Dugdale Sykes, in his chapter upon *Pericles*, in *Sidelights upon Shakespeare*, has, in my judgment, conclusively proved that the greater part of this much debated comedy was originally written by one George Wilkins, a somewhat obscure Elizabethan story-teller and dramatist, from

his own prose romance, *The Painful Adventures of Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, which was published in 1608—the first quarto edition of the play, *Pericles*, following, in 1609, with Marina's name printed as Mariana in the title page, and, as author, William Shakespeare. At this point it becomes necessary to enquire why—if the comedy was written by Wilkins—the publisher, or Shakespeare himself, or both of them, allowed it to appear with Shakespeare's name upon the title-page; and also why, if Shakespeare really had a hand in writing it, the editors of *The First Folio* deliberately omitted *Pericles* therefrom?

Some of these reasons, having already been given, need not be recapitulated here,¹ but I must mention another and potent one—the popularity of the play. That *Pericles* was a favourite upon the stage becomes apparent, when we remember that a second quarto edition appeared in the same year as the first, and that others followed in 1611, 1619, 1630, and 1635. Now popular plays are also remunerative plays; so that, bearing in mind the somewhat elastic literary conscience of the time, and its laxity concerning attributions, it seems possible that Shakespeare, knowing that money was to be made thereby, and pressed, perhaps, by his fellows at the Globe—may have connived at, or consented to, an attribution to himself of sundry works which were his in little more than name. On the other hand, the ascription of *Pericles* to Shakespeare may have been an act of deliberate fraud, on the part of George Wilkins, and of his co-authors, if there were any, or of his publisher.

¹See ante p. 141.

For such reasons as these, then, and having regard to the unquestionably Shakespearean quality of many lines in *Pericles*, especially throughout the last three acts. I was prepared, until recently, to overlook the obviously non-Shakespearean construction of the play, and to accept the generally held opinion, that a revision, by Shakespeare, of the latter portion of the comedy, established his claim to part authorship, until Professor Cowl pointed out to me that the apparently Shakespearean passages in *Pericles* were in fact a *pastiche* of quotation and paraphrase from a number of Shakespearean plays, including *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. I then became convinced that this was another case of deliberate plagiarism, and that Wilkins, finding insufficient suitable material in his own romance, which forms the ground-work of the piece, had decided to follow Jonson, and take a few leaves out of Shakespeare's book. Such a conclusion, moreover, explains completely, I think for the first time, Jonson's contemptuous reference to *Pericles*, in *Come, Leave the Loathed Stage*, as a mouldy collection of "scraps out of every dish."

Let us now submit *Pericles* to an examination similar to that already given to two of Jonson's own plays. Doing so we find that line 132 sounds a direct Shakespearean echo, in Pericles' speech:

And both like serpents are, who though they feed
On sweetest flowers, yet they poison breed—

which recalls Lady Macbeth's:

Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it
—(*Macbeth*, I, 5.)

With the second scene, however, Shakespearean imitation, though still shadowy and uncertain, is, I think, even more plainly discernible, the play that Wilkins had in mind being *Julius Cæsar*, ideas and phrases from which sound in one's ears, across the dialogue between Pericles and Helicanus. No passage, as a whole, reveals direct and wholesale plagiarism, and it may be that still, at this point of the comedy, Wilkins, with his own romance strongly in mind, was honestly straining his not very fecund inventive faculty, to work out, for himself, original matter; but he seems hardly to have succeeded, and the cumulative effect of such phrases as "I swear to silence," "I honour him," "They do abuse the king that flatter him," and "I cannot be much lower than my knee," recall, in turn, the conspirators' oath of silence, Mark Antony's "Brutus is an honourable man," Cæsar's vulnerability to flattery, and Cassius's

As low as to thy foot doth Cassius fall.

All these analogies occur within the first fifty lines of the second scene, and are followed, within the next fifty, by many more than coincidence will easily account for.

Per. What seest thou in our looks?

Hel. An angry brow, dread lord.

are a question and answer that recall Brutus'

The angry spot doth glow on Cæsar's brow.¹

and I think that I can detect the thought and manner

¹*Julius Cæsar*, I, 1.

of the noblest Roman, and of his wife also, in these lines:

Per. What wouldst thou have me do?

Her. To bear with patience¹

Such griefs as you yourself do lay upon yourself.

Moreover, when we reach the tyranny theme, a few lines lower down in the same duologue, I hear the assonances of *Julius Cæsar* sounding through the words of Pericles:

'Tis time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss

I knew him tyrannous; and tyrants fears decrease not—
while Brutus himself speaks again in,

Which love to all, of which thyself art one—

about as certainly as he does in the line (*Julius Cæsar*, I, 2) from which the above is adapted:

But let not therefore my good friends be grieved—
Among which number, Cassius, be you one—

Lastly, in Pericles'

Musings into my mind, with thousand doubts
How I might stop this tempest ere it came

we can still hear Brutus' longing exclamation (*Julius Cæsar*, V, 1):

O that a man might know
The end of this day's business ere it come.

Passing on to scene three, of the first act, I can detect nothing there that is obviously borrowed

¹*Julius Cæsar*, II, 1. *Portia*. Can I bear that with patience . . ."

from Shakespeare; but an examination of the fourth scene may possibly surprise readers, who, as yet, have not plumbed the depths of Elizabethan literary boldness. Bluntly then, the first twenty lines of *Pericles*, I, 4, are, in my judgment, lifted, unashamedly, from *Richard II*. Let the reader ponder, for a moment or two, over Cleon's opening speech:

My Dyonyza, shall we rest us here,
And by relating tales of others' griefs,
See if 'twill teach us to forget our own?—

and he will, I think, arrive at the conclusion, that the lines above quoted are Wilkin's version of (*Richard II*, III, 2):

For God's sake let us sit upon the ground,
And tell sad stories of the death of kings—

Dionyza's reply being taken from the king's speech in *Richard II* (IV, 1), which is as follows:

Bolin. I thought you had been willing to resign.

K. Rich. My crown I am; but still my griefs are mine.

You may my glories and my state depose,

But not my griefs; still am I king of those.

Bolin. Part of your cares you give me with your crown.

K. Rich. Your cares set up do not pluck my cares down.

This is the parallel passage:

Dion. That were to blow at fire in hope to quench it;¹

For who digs hills because they do aspire

Throws down one mountain to cast up a higher.

¹Cf. Bolingbroke's line:

Oh, who can hold a fire in his hand

By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?

quoted in the text, a few lines lower down.

Oh, my distressed lord, even such our griefs are;
Here they're but felt, and seen with mischief's eyes,
But like to groves, being topp'd they higher rise—

and in both, it will be observed, the thought of a see-saw fortune is identical—that one man throws off his load of grief, only to burden another's back withal; while the similarity of language, however cunningly the phrases be altered and transposed, is unmistakeable, when pointed out. Cleon's reply to Dionyza, as will now be seen, at a glance, is provided by another draft upon Bolingbroke (*Richard II*, I, 3) the passage borrowed from being that wherein the banished Duke complains to his father, Gaunt:

Oh, who can hold a fire in his hand
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
By bare imagination of a feast?

This is what Cleon makes of it.

Cleon. O Dionyza,
Who wanteth food, and will not say he wants it,
Or can conceal his hunger till he famish?

Further down in the same speech, the line:

I'll then discourse our woes, felt several years,

is probably an echo of Bolingbroke's theme—the unendurable horror of long exile:

You, cousin Hereford, upon pain of life,
Till twice five summers have enrich'd our fields,
Shall not regret our fair dominions,
But tread the stranger paths of banishment.

And the rich melody of the one, compared with

the thin, twangling notes of the other, measures the gulf that divides the borrower from him borrowed from.

At this point, our ingenious author, though not yet finished with *Richard II*—but prudently desirous, perhaps, as Jonson sometimes was, in similar circumstances, to conceal his tracks—inserts, in the middle of his scene (*Pericles*, I, 4), a passage the true inwardness of which—though I felt sure that it was mainly borrowed—I could not, at once, determine. It closes, as follows, the duologue between Cleon and Dionyza over the horrors of starving Tarsus:

Cleo. This Tarsus, o'er which I have the government,
A city on whom plenty held full hand,
For riches strew'd herself even in the streets;
Whose towers bore heads so high they kiss'd the clouds,
And strangers ne'er beheld but wondered at;
Whose men and dames so jetted and adorn'd,
Like one another's glass to trim them by:
Their tables were stored full, to glad the sight,
And not so much to feed on as delight;
All poverty was scorn'd, and pride so great,
The name of help grew odious to repeat.

Dion. Oh, 'tis true.

Cleo. But see what heaven can do! By this our change,
These mouths, who but of late, earth, sea, and air,
Were all too little to content and please,
Although they gave their creatures in abundance,
As houses are defiled for want of use,
They are now starved for want of exercise:
Those palates who, not yet two summers younger,
Must have inventions to delight the taste,
Would now be glad of bread, and beg for it.

.

Here stands a lord, and there a lady weeping;
Here many sink, yet those which see them fall
Have scarce strength left to give them burial.
Is not this true?

Dion. Our cheeks and hollow eyes do witness it.

Cleo. Oh, let those cities that of plenty's cup
And her prosperities so largely taste,
With their superfluous riots, hear these tears!
The misery of Tarsus may be theirs.

The line that gave me the cue, of course, was:

Whose towers bore heads so high they kiss'd the clouds
at once suggesting that Wilkins had in mind the
"cloud capp'd towers" of Prospero's *Tempest*
speech; but it was not until after some considera-
tion that I saw exactly what Wilkins had done, in
this passage—that he had taken Shakespeare's
picture of the prosperous city—

—the gorgeous palaces,

The solemn temples—

together with the concept that follows, of its in-
substantial dream-like transience; and had thus
woven, out of Prospero's abstract philosophy, an
objective picture of starving Tarsus, and an
appeal to other cities equally fortunate, and equally
liable to disaster:

The misery of Tarsus may be theirs

For the remainder of the scene, from line fifty-
seven onwards, Wilkins reverts to *Richard II*,
watering down into feeble, though still recogniz-
able, imitations those sweetly lyrical, yet always
amazingly vivid and pictorial lines, in which the
king at once bemoans, and revels in, his griefs and

his miseries. Then, momentarily, for the purpose of this scene, the plagiarist turns Creon into Richard, and Pericles into Bolingbroke—Cleon's

Speak out thy sorrows which thou bringst in haste,
For comfort is too far for us to expect

being taken again from the famous scene (*Richard II*, II, 3), between the king, Aumerle, and other lords, of which he has already made use, wherein Richard repudiates the possibility of consolation:

No matter where, of comfort no man speak:
while the line,

One sorrow never comes but brings an heir
That may succeed as his inheritor,

is, for a change, not from *Richard II*, but from *Hamlet* (IV, 5):

—Sorrows come not in single spies,
But in battalions;

and the continuing lines of Cleon's speech:

Some neighbouring nation,
Taking advantage of our misery,
Hath stuff'd these hollow vessels with their power,
To beat us down, the which are down already.
And make a conquest of unhappy me—

echo the descent of Bolingbroke upon England; and the intellectual effeminacy, and exalted self-pity of its fallen king, as expressed in the well-known speech of Richard from the walls (*Richard II*, II, 3):

Down, down I come; like glistening Phaethon,
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.

In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,
To come at traitors calls and do them grace.

In the base court? Come down? Down, court! down,
king!

For night owls shriek where mounting larks should
sing.

Other lines, to the same import, spoken by Cleon
such as:

What need we fear,

The ground's the lowest, and we are half way there;

are likewise all in the same deposition vein, with
Pericles coming in for Bolingbroke. Pericles, with

Nor come we to add sorrow to your tears,

But to relieve them of their heavy load

—a clumsily turned couplet, indeed—parodies
weakly *Richard II*, IV, 1, where Bolingbroke
says:

Part of your cares you give me with your crown.

Here the redundancy of the imitated version,
and its mixed metaphor, affords a typical example
of Wilkins' carelessness and inefficiency as a
writer, even with such a model before him.
Wilkins' comparatively effective masking of his
indebtedness is due, I think, to the relative
timidity, and the adroiter cunning, of his earlier
borrowings, whereas, with the later ones, he
becomes, as other pilferers will, bolder by custom
and immunity. Let us now consider his handling
of the second act of *Pericles*, pausing awhile before
doing so, to discuss, for a moment, the relations
of this play to *The Tempest*.

That *Pericles*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, *The Tempest*, and *Macbeth* are all, to some extent, linked together, is, I think, a fact generally admitted by Shakespearean students. Sailors, sea-captains, storms, tempests, shipwrecks, cast-aways, children lost and restored, music, monsters, griefs, romantic adventures in far-off lands, are more or less common to most of them; and through them all is visible a certain similarity of phrase and idea, due, in part, to resemblance of theme, and in part to the fact that all these plays are the common product of the second half of the first decade of the seventeenth century.¹ Most of them, in my judgment, were composed at rather earlier dates than have generally been set down for them; and I much doubt whether, in the light of the pages that are to follow, we can any longer regard, for example, *The Tempest*, as the last written of Shakespeare's plays.²

That the subject of *The Tempest* connects itself at once with the then current stories of the colonization of Virginia, and the many maritime adventures of contemporary British seamen, is, of course, undeniable; and it may well be true that Shakespeare conceived his first idea of a shipwreck, as a basis for a drama, from the disaster of 1609;³ and that Prospero's command to Ariel, to fetch dew from the "still vexed Bermoothes" may be an echo of that event. Another then popular

¹*Cymbeline*, for example, shows parallels of language with *Hamlet*, *A Winter's Tale*, *Macbeth*, and *Tempest*, especially the last two plays.

²This assumption has always been largely sentimental.

³The wreck of Sir Thomas Gates' squadron, recounted in *A Discovery of the Bermudas*, 1610. In my judgment, however, for reasons that will appear later, the first version of *The Tempest* was written before 1609.

theme, that helped no doubt, to shape *The Tempest* in Shakespeare's mind, was the contemporary passion for seeing exhibits of monsters—a form of show then much popularized by the tough yarns of returned sailors, and of less honest persons, purporting to be rovers of the sea. It was natural that strange beasts of many kinds—fishes among them—should soon find their way into the theatres as well as into the court masques; and there is the evidence of Ben Jonson, in his introduction to *Bartholomew Fair*:

If there be never a servant monster in the fair, who can help it, nor a nest of antiques. He is loath to make nature afraid in his plays, like those that beget Tales, Tempests, and such-like drolleries.

The probabilities point also to Shakespeare having drawn, for *The Tempest*, upon some earlier play, now lost, of which *The Comedy of the Beautiful Sidea*, acted by the English players in Germany during the first year of the seventeenth century, and published in Jacob Ayer's *Opus Theatricum*, is also an echo.¹

One passage from *Pericles*, in particular, comes, obviously, very near to *The Tempest*, and that is the dialogue concerning these same shipwrecks and sea-monsters, carried on between the three Fishermen (*Pericles*, II, 1) and listened to by the sea-soaked

¹The plots of the two plays are very similar, and there are many parallel passages, of which the following is one example.

Ferdinand. O! if a virgin,
And your affection not gone
forth, I'll make you
The Queen of Naples.

Englebrecht. I would to thee my
service give,
And ever love thee, while I live;
Thou should'st a royal station
grace.

Pericles himself, who has just been cast ashore from the wreck.

First Fish. Alas, poor souls, it grieved my heart to hear what pitiful cries they made to us to help them, when, well-a-day, we could scarce help ourselves.

Third Fish. Nay, master, said not I as much when I saw the porpus how he bounded and tumbled? they say they're *half fish, half flesh*: a plague on them, they ne'er come but I look to be washed. Master, I marvel how the fishes live in the sea.

First Fish. Why, as men do a-land; the great ones eat up the little ones: I can compare our rich misers to nothing so fitly as to a whale; a plays and tumbles, driving the poor fry before him, and at last devours them all at a mouthful: such whales have I heard on o' the land, who never leave gaping till they've swallowed the whole parish, church, steeple, bells and all.

Per. [*aside*]. A pretty moral.

Third Fish. But, master, if I had been the sexton, I would have been that day in the belfry.

Sec. Fish. Why, man?

Third Fish. Because he should have swallowed me too: and when I had been in his belly, I would have kept such a jangling of the bells, that he would never have left till he had cast bells, steeple, church and parish up again.

Now that first quoted speech, of the First Fisherman, quite obviously echoes, or is echoed by, Miranda, in *The Tempest* (I, 2):

O the cry did knock

Against my very heart! Poor souls they perished!

and the sequel must show, if possible, which, of Shakespeare and Wilkins, here borrowed from the other. Further, the first speech of the Third Fisherman, in the quoted passage, contains a

description of the "porpus," as "half fish, half flesh," recalling Trinculo (*The Tempest*, III, 2) with his "Half a fish and half a monster." It is to be noted, however, that the close of the Third Fisherman's first speech:

Master, I marvel how the fishes live in the sea—
with the First Fisherman's reply:

Why, as men do a-land: the great ones eat up the little ones—

comes, not from Shakespeare, but, as Mr. Dugdale Sykes has pointed out,¹ almost verbatim from Wilkins' novel, which forms the basis of the early part of the play; whereas the conclusion of that same speech seems to take us, very remarkably back to *The Tempest*, giving, in fact, quite a little epitome of Shakespeare's masque, in the words:

Such whales have I heard on o' the land, who never
leave gaping till they've swallowed the whole parish,
church, steeple, bells and all.

Here the number of possible gleanings from *The Tempest* are quite remarkable; for they include the storm, the shipwreck, the monster—who becomes Caliban—the prince sea-soaked and disconsolate, like Ferdinand, yet saved alive, and the pity of spectators; while even the idea of the steeple, and the chime of its bells, are faintly heard in:

Hark now I hear them, ding dong bell!
a theme which is repeated in the Third Fisherman's next speech;

¹*Sidelights on Shakespeare*, p. 148.

Had I been in his belly I would have kept such a jangling
of the bells, that he should never have left till he cast
bells, steeple, church and parish up again.

A few lines lower down, the Second Fisherman's
comment:

What a drunken knave was the sea to cast thee in our
way—

needs no violent distortion to remind us of drunken
Stephano, cast ashore; and farther on, in the same
scene, the First Fisherman's:

And I have a gown here; come, put it on; keep thee
warm;

is heard again in *The Tempest* (IV, 1), where
Stephano bids Trinculo:

Put off that gown . . . by this hand I'll have that gown;
and later rewards the jester's wit with:

Here's a garment for thee . . . "Steal by line and level" is
an excellent pass of pate; there's another garment for't.

Towards the end of the same scene, in *Pericles*, the
clothing-motive is again repeated, in the Prince's
speech to the Fishermen, when the armour, be-
queathed to him in his father's will, has been
brought ashore in their net; and he begs

This coat of worth,
For it was sometime target to a king;
I know it by this mark. He loved me dearly,
And for his sake I wish the having of it;
And that you'll guide me to your sovereign's court,
Where with it I may appear a gentleman.

This passage seems to me to be taken from Trin-

culo's speech in the same scene of *The Tempest* from which I have just quoted

O King Stephano! O peer! O worthy Stephano! look
what a wardrobe here is for thee!

where the idea of a wardrobe fit for a king, though burlesqued, is none the less present; and, if further analogies are wanted to support the proof they are supplied, I think, by the last two speeches of *Pericles*, in the same scene (II, 1), where his lines:

And spite of all the rapture of the sea
This jewel holds his building on my arm—

hint at Prospero's magical power, to maintain the freshness of the shipwrecked courtiers' clothes (*The Tempest*, I, 2), where Ariel tells Prospero that there is

On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
But fresher than before—

an idea which is twice more repeated in *Pericles*—once by the prince himself, of the infant Marina (III, 1), "This fresh new sea-farer" and later (III, 2) by Cerimon, of the queen: "For look how fresh she looks."

Lastly, so far as this scene (III, 1) of *Pericles* is concerned, its closing couplet, spoken by the Prince of Tyre—

Then honour be but a goal to my will,
This day I'll rise, or else add ill—

very probably originates in Stephano's mad ambition to become king of the island. Thereupon, with the close of that first scene of the second act, Wilkins' borrowings from *The Tempest* end, for a time, the remaining four scenes of the act showing,

in my judgment, no definitely Shakespearean origin.

Readers who have been following the arguments of this book closely, up till now, will have realized that these borrowings and transmutations, from one Elizabethan play to another, whether by Shakespeare or from him, are, as one would expect, often, though not always, confined to particular scenes, which gripped the borrower's imagination, or, for some reason, appealed to him, as peculiarly suited to his purpose. Shakespeare, for example, when writing *Macbeth*, had specially in mind, as I have tried to show, the last scene of the second act of *Arden*, and the first two of the third act. Wilkins, when borrowing from *Twelfth Night*, for the fifth act of *Pericles*, made use—as we shall see later—of all the first four acts of Shakespeare's play, though he compressed those liftings into one scene of his own; and now, in the same way, we have just seen how Wilkins has compressed, into the first scene of the second act of *Pericles*, all his excerpts from *The Tempest*, that we have noted hitherto. With the opening of the third act, however, we shall see him return to *The Tempest* again; make use of it, for two contiguous scenes (III, 1–2); and then borrow from it no more.

These further analogies, which are remarkable, begin towards the close of Gower's prologue to the third act, where he describes how Pericles, returning with his queen, child, and nurse to Tyre, there to take the crown, is overtaken by a storm.

Fortune's mood

Varies again; the grizzled north
Disgorges such a tempest forth,

That, as a duck for life that dives,
So up and down the poor ship drives.

In your imagination hold
This stage the ship, upon whose deck
The sea-tost Pericles appears to speak.

Here, with the entry of Pericles on shipboard,
opens the first scene of the act.

Per. Thou god of this great vast, rebuke these surges,
Which wash both heaven and hell; and thou, that hast
Upon the winds command, bind them in brass,
Having call'd them from the deep! O, still
Thy deafening dreadful thunders; gently quench
Thy nimble sulphurous flashes! O, how, Lychorida,
How does my queen? Thou stormest venomously;
Wilt thou spit all thyself? The seaman's whistle
Is as a whisper in the ears of death,
Unheard.

Already, before reaching this point in my study
of *Pericles*, I had realized that, when Wilkins'
blank verse attains a certain degree of fervour, if
not of excellence, its genuineness is usually open
to suspicion; and, with recollections of *The Tem-
pest* still in my mind, the first line of that speech:

Thou god of this great vast, rebuke these surges—

sounded familiarly in my ears. I seemed to hear
them spoken, not by Pericles, but by Prospero;
and turning to V, 1, of *The Tempest*, the mystery
was at once solved. Pericles' speech above quoted
is, I feel sure, a cunningly hidden, yet quite
recognizable, paraphrase of passages from Pro-
spero's famous monologue beginning:

Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves—
the sea-god, instead of the elves, being invoked
by Pericles, while his phrase:

Thou, that hast
Upon the winds command, bind them in brass,
Having call'd them from the deep—

is a development of Prospero's:

call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And twixt the green sea and the azured vault
Set roaring war.

Here, similarly, "the dread rattling thunder,"
of Shakespeare, becomes "the deafening dreadful
thunders" of Wilkins; and, following it, Shake-
speare's:

Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt—

is paraphrased into

Thy nimble sulphurous flashes . . .
Thou stormest venomously;
Wilt thou split all thyself?

A little further on, in the same scene (*Pericles*, III,
1, 19) we get another interesting example of how,
almost certainly Wilkins was here borrowing from
The Tempest—and not Shakespeare from *Pericles*—
in Lychorida's appeal to the Prince of Tyre;

Patience, good sir; do not assist the storm;

which appears thus in *The Tempest* (I, 1, 14, 15),
where the boatswain protests against the passengers
getting in the way of the crew:—

You mar our labours; keep your cabins, you do assist the storm.

Now that speech of the boatswain, be it observed, is, in the circumstances, a perfectly natural one, the phrase, "You do assist the storm," meaning literally, what it says—that the presence of passengers upon deck, at that moment, was hampering the crew in the execution of their technical duties, as seamen; but the same phrase, in the mouth of a nurse carrying an infant child, though quite comprehensible, as meaning simply, "Do not make matters worse than they are," is wholly unnatural, and, because it is out of character, possesses nothing like the force and cogency that we hear in the same words, when bellowed by the boatswain, above the roaring and lashing of the storm. That line alone, therefore, seems to prove, almost conclusively, that the phrase is originally Shakespearean.¹

Then, in line 43 of the same scene, occurs the following passage:

First Sail. Slack the bolins there! Thou wilt not, wilt thou?
Blow and split thyself.

Second Sail. But sea-room, an the brine and cloudy billows kiss the moon, I care not.

all of which seems to be Wilkins' not very free translation, from the opening page of *The Tempest*, of the boatswain's cheery orders to the crew:

Cheerly my hearts yare, yare! Take in the topsail. Tend

¹This paragraph was suggested to me by Professor R. P. Cowl, who first pointed out the unnaturalness of: "Do not assist the storm"; in the mouth of a nurse. Cf. *The Authorship of Pericles*, by Prof. R. P. Cowl.

to the master's whistle. Blow, till thou burst thy wind,
if room enough.

Wilkins, it will be observed, has been careful to make his meaning clear, by expanding "room" into "sea-room"; and he eliminates "the master's whistle," perhaps because he has already made Pericles speak of "the seamen's whistle," in the opening part of the scene.¹

Pericles' speech, a few lines lower down, beginning, "a terrible childbed," is also interesting, because Wilkins, in the phrase, "scarcely confined in the ooze," introduces a word twice used by Shakespeare in *The Tempest*, and, in the lines,

a monument upon thy bones,
And aye-remaining lamps, the belching whale
And humming water must o'erwhelm thy corpse,
Lying with simple shells—

seems to me to echo, however cunningly the thought be transmuted, the substance of Ariel's song:

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade. . . .

The ideas in the two extracts, though very differently expressed, are, none the less, almost identical.

We come, in the next scene (III, 2), upon another

¹In IV, 1, Wilkins has another storm scene, with "the boatswain whistles, and the master calls," wherein he cunningly introduces a prayer-motive (for Marina when Leonine is about to slay her) which he may have got from *The Tempest*, I, 1, "All lost? to prayer!"

curious example of Wilkins' methods in writing *Pericles*; for here, excepting the line:

Shake off the golden slumber of repose,¹

which is contrived, I suppose, from Ariel's "Shake off slumber and beware," the plagiarist here, for a page or two, turns away from *The Tempest* to another Shakespearean play, upon which he has already drawn with some freedom, namely, *Julius Caesar*, where, in the storm scene, as so vividly described by Casca, he finds more material for his dramatic purpose. There can be no doubt, I think, that the following passage, between Cerimon and the servant—

Ceri. 'T has been a turbulent and stormy night.

Serv. I have been in many; but such a night as this
Till now, I ne'er endured.

is from Casca (*Julius Caesar*, I, 3).

But never till to-night, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest dropping fire;

and the supposition is confirmed by the First Gentleman's speech, a little lower down (line 15),

Our lodging, standing bleak upon the sea
Shook as the earth did quake;
The very principals did seem to rend
And all-to topple—

also fathered by Casca's lines, from the same scene of *Julius Caesar*;

Are you not moved, when all the sway of earth
Shakes like a thing unfirm? O Cicero,

¹The un-Shakespearean phrase, "Slumber of repose," is carelessly redundant, and typical of Wilkins.

I have seen tempests when the scolding winds
Have rived the knotty oaks. . . .

It is noteworthy, too, that Cerimon's lines (99-101)

Here eyelids, cases to those heavenly jewels
Which Pericles hath lost, begin to part
Their fringes of bright gold

echo a turn of phrase which appears in *The Tempest* (I, 2), when Prospero, calling Miranda's attention to Ferdinand's presence, bids her:

The fringed curtain of thine eye advance
And say what thou seest yond.

The only other borrowing that I have detected in this scene, is one following close upon those from *Julius Caesar*, where Wilkins ends a longish speech, from Cerimon, upon four lines, in which he contrives to reproduce, with a certain felicity, the rhythms of the well-known passage in *Henry VIII* (II, 3):

'Twere better to be lowly born,
And range with humble livers in content,
Than to be perked up with a glistening grief,
And wear a golden sorrow—

lines which appear in *Pericles* thus:

Which doth give me
A more content in course of true delight
Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,
Or tie my treasure up in silken bags,
To please the fool and death.

In Act IV of *Pericles*, there is only a limited amount of borrowing from Shakespeare, which is what one would expect, seeing that three of its

scenes (2, 5 and 6) are set in, or in front of, a brothel. From the start, however, Wilkins goes to his favourite source of inspiration, and promptly gives us a cue, with the closing lines of the chorus:

Dionyza does appear
With Leonine, a murderer.

and at once, in Dionyza's first speech (*Pericles*, IV, 1) we breathe the haunted, conscience-stricken, "letting-I-dare-not" atmosphere of *Macbeth*.

Dion. Thy oath remember; thou hast sworn to do't.
Tis but a blow, which never shall be known.
Thou canst not do a thing in the world so soon,
To yield thee so much profit. Let not conscience,
Which is but cold, inflaming love i' thy bosom,
Inflame too nicely; nor let pity, which
Even women have cast off, melt thee, but be
A soldier to thy purpose.

These lines are just adulterated Lady Macbeth, their originals being plainly recognizable in her ladyship's speech (*Macbeth*, I, 7):

What beast was't then
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this—

wherein are found the "swearing" and the "pity" motives, both of which Dionyza introduces in the speech under discussion, while the "conscience," "advancement," and "secrecy" motives, of which also she makes use, are found scattered throughout Lady Macbeth's other speeches, in the same scene of that play.

Marina's entrance (*Pericles*, IV, 1), carrying a basket of flowers, and her lines,

No, I will rob Tellus of her weed
To strew thy green with flowers: the yellows, blues,
The purple violets and marigolds,
Shall, as a carpet, hang upon thy grave,
While summer days do last—

seem to echo Perdita to Florizel in rhythm and feeling,¹ as well as words, thereby linking *A Winter's Tale* also with *Pericles*, and emphasizing once more, the connection we have already remarked between the play under discussion, and a whole group of later Shakespearean works. Thereupon the first line of Dionyza's next speech—

How now, Marina! why do you keep alone?

takes us back again to Lady Macbeth, since it is taken, almost verbatim, from *Macbeth*, III, 2, where, upon his entrance, she challenges her husband:

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone?²

¹*Per.* O, these I lack,
To make you garlands of; and my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er!

Flo. What, like a corse?

Per. No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;

²This parallel was kindly pointed out to me by Mr. Arthur Gray, the Master of Jesus College, Cambridge.

This borrowing of a single line, when read in conjunction with other plagiarisms from *Macbeth*, to which I have called, or shall call, attention, in this scene, seems to me to be sufficient, in itself, almost to disprove genuine Shakespearean authorship of this play. That Shakespeare should have thus consented to maltreat his own masterpieces, borrowing, almost at random, a passage here, and a line there—just as it suited his purpose—is, to me, an untenable theory; though, on the contrary, that method of going to work I regard as a very natural one, for a plagiarist equipped with limited imagination, yet possessing considerable imitative faculty, seeking copy among the Shakespearean plays, and ready, or deliberately purposing, to publish his dramatic romance under Shakespeare's name. Such a man, working under such conditions, is, for obvious reasons, compelled to dissemble, by borrowing far and wide, filching only a limited amount from any particular scene, and altering that little, just enough cunningly to disguise procedure, while retaining, throughout the verse, as much as possible of the peculiar, and inimitable Shakespearean ring, and musical quality, that shall proclaim the master's hand. Such is the method which, in my judgment, Wilkins pursued, with considerable skill, throughout the apparently Shakespearean passages of this play.

At the opening of the third scene of this fourth act of *Pericles*, similar borrowings from *Macbeth* are repeated, for some thirty further lines in speeches with which I need not weary the reader.

Here are a few excerpts taken almost at random.

Cleon. Were I chief lord of all this spacious world,
I'd give it to undo the deed—

and this from the same speaker:

O, go to. Well, well,¹
Of all the faults beneath the heavens, . . .

and this, by Dionyza:

I do shame
To think of what a noble strain you are
And of how coward a spirit.²

By the time that we reach the fifth act, Wilkins' weak and vagrant fancy, still looking to Shakespeare for wings wherewith to fly, turns, this time, neither to *The Tempest*, nor to one of the great tragedies, but to that most popular of Shakespeare's comedies—fair game for every uninventive mind—wherein we have already seen Ben Jonson quarrying twice over, namely *Twelfth Night*.

The scene, in *Pericles*, is the first of act five. Marina, as gifted as she is beautiful, and now happily removed from the brothel to an honest house, is maintaining herself by singing, dancing, and needle-work; and, at this particular moment in the play, is pleasantly screened beneath:

The leafy shelter that abuts against
The island's side.

Pericles, her father, ignorant of his daughter's proximity, and supposing her to be lost at sea, is

¹Cf. *Macbeth* V, 1:

Doctor. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

²Cf. *Macbeth* II, 2:

Lady Mac. I shame to wear a heart so white.

on board a pavilioned ship, lying off Mitylene. Beside his vessel is moored a Tyrian barge, from which comes Lysimachus, Governor of Tyre, accompanied by other gentlemen, and followed by two sailors. The talk, between Lysimachus and Helicanus, turns upon Pericles, who, still mourning over lost wife and child, has abjured the society of men, and

for this three months hath not spoken
To any one, nor taken sustenance
But to prorogue his grief.

The First Lord thereupon urges the charms of Marina, as one capable of loosening the prince's tongue:—

We have a maid in Mitylene, I durst wager,
Would win some words of him.

The girl, accordingly, is sent for, and, having come, practises with song upon the kingly patient, her own father, Pericles, who has drawn near. Her ditty works no immediate effect upon the distraught prince; but soon the girl, growing bolder, finds courage to speak:

Mar. I am a maid,
My lord, that ne'er before invited eyes,
But have been gazed on like a comet,¹ she speaks,
My Lord, that, may be, hath endured a grief
Might equal yours, if both were justly weigh'd.²

¹Cf. *Henry IV*, pt. 1, III, 2, 47:

"But like a comet I was wonder'd at.

²Cf. *Henry IV*, pt. 2, IV, 1, 67:

I have in equal balance justly weigh'd
What wrongs our arms may do.

At that point in my reading, struck by the familiar note that the scene was beginning to sound in my imagination, I, like Pericles, became attentive to Marina's story. Elsewhere one had heard words, of similar kind and import, spoken by a maid to a disconsolate prince; words, moreover, telling a kindred tale, of a shipwrecked girl, of sailors, of a sea-captain, and of a maid mourning with inconsolable grief over a lost relative—and introducing also the music motive, as a mitigator of human grief. The lines that came instinctively to my mind, in this connection, were these:

My father had a daughter loved a man,
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship—

and then it seemed clear that Viola was part mother to Marina; as a careful comparison between the last two above-quoted passages will speedily show. We are here mentally in Illyria, as well as in Mitylene, and the immediate sequel confirms that opinion, when Marina hints at her noble birth; and Pericles with his:

My fortunes—parentage—good parentage—
To equal mine!

echoes Olivia's "What is your parentage?" (*Twelfth Night*, I, 5). A moment later we are again in *Twelfth Night*, II, 4, at once reminded there of the Duke's: "What's her history?" a question which, in *Pericles*, is asked, and answered, as follows:

Per. Where were you bred?
And how achieved you these endowments, which
You make more rich to owe?

Mar. If I should tell my history, it would seem
Like lies disdain'd in the reporting.

Then, some twenty lines farther down, a speech of Pericles, to Marina, makes obvious the parallel, which, up to now, has called somewhat for the eye of faith.

Per. Tell thy story;
If thine considered prove the thousandth part
Of my endurance, thou art a man, and I
Have suffer'd like a girl: yet, thou dost look
Like Patience gazing on kings' graves and smiling
Extremity out of act.¹

It is, perhaps, necessary to point out here that

Thou art a man, and I
Have suffer'd like a girl

hints at the concealed sex of Viola—"I am not what I am"—but the least careful reader will not fail to observe that the concluding lines of that excerpt are just a paraphrase of Viola's "patience on a monument" speech, which is imitated again, this time by Lysimachus, a few lines lower down:

She never would tell
Her parentage; being demanded that,
She would sit still and weep.

¹On the same page of the Temple Edition (line 150) Marina's words, referring to her own name:

The name
Was given me by one that had some power,
My father and a king.

seem to be borrowed from Prospero (*The Tempest*, I, 2) when speaking of Miranda, he says:

Thy father was the duke of Milan and
A prince of power

Here the parentage motive is substituted for the love motive of *Twelfth Night*, and the "sitting" idea is also introduced. Lastly, we have Pericles using, almost unchanged, the phrase used by Olivia, to Viola, "The music of the spheres."

Swinburne, strong in the conviction that with the possible exception of the so-called Chorus, the last three acts of *Pericles* are wholly the work of Shakespeare "in the ripest fullness of latter genius," detects, as we have already seen, in the *Pericles* version of the "patience" speech, simply a case of Shakespeare borrowing from himself, "reinvigorating," in the process, one of his most beautiful images, and thereby transfiguring the passage "from human beauty to divine." Mr. Dugdale Sykes also, in the chapter on *Pericles*, in his *Sidelights on Shakespeare*, writes, of the first scene of the fifth act, to which all the *Twelfth Night* parallels are confined, that "the excellence of the verse is sufficient evidence that Shakespeare has re-written this throughout."

From these conclusions, however, as readers will have gathered, I wholly dissent, for reasons other than those already afforded by the parallels with other Shakespearean plays, that the foregoing pages have revealed. To suppose that Shakespeare may have borrowed a beautiful metaphor from his own *Twelfth Night*, to use it again in an improved form in *Pericles*—though the "improvement" be matter of opinion—is, of course, a perfectly justifiable assumption; but to believe that Shakespeare deliberately crammed, or even permitted to be crammed, into one scene of *Pericles*, some of the loveliest and most wistfully pathetic

lines that ever came even from his own pen, is, I think, to stretch too far the assumption of his indifference; even though one were unaware of the additional, and precisely similar, parallels that have been pointed out, with *Julius Cæsar*, *Richard II*, and *The Tempest*. That Shakespeare, when it suited his purpose, was accustomed to borrow freely from himself, I quite agree; and it seems certain that he transferred, from such early plays as *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*¹ ideas of which his mature genius made wonderful use; but in such cases he borrowed invariably to improve, whereas, in my judgment, the mind, whosoever it was, that put snatches of *Twelfth Night* into *Pericles* did not, with deference to Swinburne, in one instance, better his borrowing. I cannot, therefore, believe that these graftings were the work of Shakespeare; and I doubt whether they were done with his approval, granted that the play *Pericles* first appeared with Shakespeare's name attached.

When we come to consider the connection between *Pericles* and *The Tempest*, the matter is more complicated, because, though the date at which *The Tempest* was written is not certainly known, students generally have been more or less agreed, in ascribing it to about 1611, some four years, that is, after *Pericles*; so that, when the parallels between the two plays first became apparent to

¹E.g., the balcony scene in Romeo from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Possibly Act II Scene 1, of *Love's Labour's Lost*, in which the Princess of France commissions Boyet to go, on her behalf, to the "forbidden gates" of Navarre, gave to Shakespeare a hint for the parallel scene at the opening of *Twelfth Night*, where Viola becomes Orsino's ambassador to Olivia's forbidden presence.

me, I naturally drew the conclusion that Shakespeare was repeating himself from *Pericles*; but later it became clear to me that when Wilkins wrote *Pericles*, about 1609, he must have had before him a copy of *The Tempest*, more or less resembling the form in which the play has come down to us; and that what has been so often considered as Shakespeare's last play, was, in fact, written several years earlier than has been supposed hitherto. All the borrowings from Shakespeare, for *Pericles*, it seems to me, were done approximately at the same time, and probably by the same hand; and I am forced to the conclusion that Shakespeare did not, in any real sense, revise *Pericles*, nor have any such hand in it as would justify the use of his own name as author. Since we have seen, moreover, in the preceding chapter, exactly what Jonson was doing, almost at the same time, with *Twelfth Night*, there is nothing about Wilkins's procedure which clashes at all with that strange example of the liberties that might be, and actually were being, taken with Shakespeare, towards the close of the first decade of the sixteenth century.

I will now turn, for a moment, to the detailed consideration of the text of *Pericles*, made by Mr. Dugdale Sykes. The margins of my copy of *Pericles*, upon which I worked during my study of the text, are black with parallel quotations from Shakespeare; but in no single instance do I find that the passages which I have noted as being taken from Shakespeare, clash with those which Mr. Sykes, working from the novel, quotes as being unmistakably by Wilkins. We seem to be wholly at

one thereon; our only difference being, that Mr. Sykes sees Shakespeare's own hand, where I see that of Shakespeare's borrower. Take, for example Pericles' speech, at the opening of Act III, which begins:

Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven!

This passage Mr. Sykes attributes to Wilkins; and I find that I have underscored in it only one line, as being borrowed, namely:

And left me breath

Nothing to think on but ensuing death;

which may be from Prospero (*The Tempest*, V, 1):

Every third thought shall be my grave.

Turning to the first scene of the third act, the opening speech in which:

Thou god of this great vast, rebuke these surges—

Mr. Sykes holds to be "unmistakably Shakespearean," again I agree wholly with him. Those lines, as I have already tried to show, are a loose paraphrase of Prospero's speech (*The Tempest*, V, 1) beginning, "Ye elves of hills"; and when we come to the second long speech by Pericles, in the same scene, I turn once more to my annotated copy, and finding no Shakespearean reference, concur once more with Mr. Sykes, that these lines—as indeed he proves—are taken by Wilkins, almost unchanged, from his own novel. In *Pericles* they run thus:

Thou art the rudeliest welcome to this world

That ever was a prince's child. Happy what follows!

Thou hast as chiding a nativity

As fire, air, water, earth and heaven can make,
To herald thee from the womb.

The novel reads:

Poor inch of nature (quoth he) thou art as rudely
welcome to the world as ever Princess babe was, and
hast as childing a nativity as fire, air, earth, and
water can afford thee.

Only a few lines farther down, however, the
Second Sailor is talking pure *Tempest*, with his
"But sea-room," etc., and the next scene transports
us to Rome and *Julius Cæsar*. Thus, it was, that
Wilkins, sandwiching Shakespeare and himself,
concocted a play, which, judging by the number of
quarto editions published, must have hit off very
well the popular taste of its day, and continued to
hold the stage, for a hundred years after it was
written. The truth, however, will out at last;
and when Jonson, in 1629, wrote his ode,
Come, Leave the Loathed Stage, he makes the
persistent vogue of *Pericles* the theme of a vigorous
protest, which I understand now, though once I did
not, and which may possess renewed interest to
readers, in the light of the pages that have pre-
ceded it.

No doubt some mouldy tale
Like *Pericles*, and stale
As the shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish,—
Scraps out of every dish,
Thrown forth, and rak'd into the common tub,—
May keep up the Play-Club.
There, sweepings do as well
As the best-order'd meal;
For who the relish of these guests will fit,
Needs set them but the alms-basket of wit.

Jonson's "every dish," as I understand him, means all those plays of Shakespeare: *Richard II*, *Julius Caesar*, and the rest—from which Wilkins drew scraps for his *Pericles* pie, while the phrase "alms-basket," if it is to be taken literally, may possibly mean that Shakespeare gave of his own willingly, and was not filched from, without his knowledge or consent. The exact truth of the matter we cannot know; yet Jonson's surly ill-humour, concerning this play, ought not, I think, to be taken too seriously, when we remember that, within a comparatively short time after *Pericles* had been written, Jonson himself, though with skill far greater than any that Wilkins could command, was committing almost the very sin of which he here accuses the author or authors of *Pericles*. It seems quite certain, moreover, that the Elizabethan dramatists in general, though they often resented plagiarism from themselves, rarely made any scruple about practising it upon others, in an age which did not recognize, as we do now, a man's exclusive right to the creations of his own brain. As Puff puts it, in *The Critic*, "a dexterous plagiarist may do anything," and the determining difference, in this respect, between Shakespeare and his fellows, was, that he alone could lift what he borrowed to a plane far loftier than that of his original source, as when—if my arguments in this book have carried conviction—he transmuted the domestic tragedy of *Arden* into the royal tragedy of *Macbeth*, or the bloody and licentious horrors of *Titus* into the fairy woodland enchantments of *The Dream*. Dryden's words, concerning Ben Jonson; "He invades authors like a monarch, and what would be theft

in other poets is only victory in him" are more applicable to Shakespeare than to the man of whom they were written. Wilkins's plagiarisms in *Pericles* were, likewise, for a time, "victory in him"; but time brings about "revenges," and Jonson—himself an expert at the borrowing game—either saw through Wilkins, or knew the facts. So also, I take it, did Shakespeare's editors, who, though the quartos had given *Pericles* to him, rejected the play from the Folio of 1623.¹ *Pericles* was excluded, also, from the Second Folio, but reappeared, as Shakespeare's work, in the Folios of 1664 and 1685, which included *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, and other plays now no longer held to be Shakespearean. It was, no doubt, natural that, with the passing of the generation that had known the greatest dramatist, and remembered some, at least, of the facts concerning his work, the old tradition of Shakespearean authorship should revive. That a certain majesty of Shakespearean atmosphere and diction broods yet over portions of *Pericles* is undeniable; and the fact that it is a "borrowed majesty" does not altogether destroy the illusion. *Arden of Feversham* also has been held, by Swinburne, Knight, and others, to be Shakespeare's play; and, for a time, I was inclined

¹ Were I asked why the editors of *The Folio*, while excluding *Pericles*, included *Henry VIII*, written almost certainly by Massinger and Fletcher, and *Titus Andronicus*, written mainly by Peele, I answer that I do not know. By the year 1623 they may have become hazy concerning the facts. Shakespeare may have been pressed by his fellows at the Globe to add another to the list of Henry plays, that might be acceptable at court; and, unable, or unwilling, to do the work himself may have delegated it to Fletcher and Massinger, reserving to himself right of revision and supervision, which, however, he seems not greatly to have exercised.

to believe that he had, indeed, a much larger hand in it than I feel disposed to ascribe to him now. The reason for this, as I have tried to show in Chapter II, is, in my judgment, simply that, here, again, though in an inverse sense, the mentalities of the two authors are merged, and, consciously or unconsciously, we who read *Arden*—in itself a moving and powerful play—read into it also something of the mind, and something of the power, of the author of *Macbeth*. Thus also, about *Pericles*, the Shakespearean fragrance lingers.

CHAPTER X

"PARADISE LOST" AND "A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM"

Shows that Milton was indebted to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for certain passages in Book IV of *Paradise Lost*.

WE have seen, in a previous chapter, that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* seems to have owed its origin basically to *Titus Andronicus*; but also, as regards the clown scenes especially, to *Love's Labour's Lost*. That the play was, from the first, a popular one may be guessed, not only by reason of the peculiar fascination which it still exerts over children and grown-ups alike, but also from the fact that it was frequently borrowed from during Shakespeare's lifetime, and after.¹

Lately, however, I chanced to find another, and greater name than Fletcher's, or Darley's among those who have sought inspiration in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It was within a few days of the total eclipse of the sun (July, 1927), when that impending and impressive phenomenon was much occupying men's minds, and was filling the Press with articles that made a welcome and beneficial change from murder cases and lawn-tennis. I had been dining with the veteran dramatist,

¹A clever imitator of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the poet George Darley, whose *Sylvia* (1827) imitates also *A Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Faithful Shepherdess*.

Henry Arthur Jones; and our post-prandial chat had fallen, naturally, upon the then prevailing topic. My host, whose zeal for Milton is second only to his life-long love for Shakespeare, quoted that wonderful simile, in the first book of *Paradise Lost*, wherein Satan is likened to the sun in eclipse:

He above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent
Stood like a tow'r; his form had not yet lost
All his original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and th'excess
Of glory obscur'd; as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations.

I had forgotten the passage; and, deciding that the time had come to refresh my memory concerning *Paradise Lost*, I took up the poem, on the following evening, and was soon lost in its cosmic sublimity, and the rolling grandeur of its cadences. Towards the middle of book four—the hour then verging upon midnight, and my lyric raptures a little dulled by fatigue—two words, nevertheless, in particular, caught my fancy. They were “impetuous winds,” the rhythm of which phrase insistently transmuted itself, in my mind, into “contagious fogs,”; so that when the three lines immediately following:

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in—

sounded curiously reminiscent of the fairy's song,

in the next scene of *The Dream*, I began to conclude that this might be more than coincidence; and to wonder whether Milton, who, as is well known, borrowed largely from Virgil and Homer—as well as from the Bible—had not also been helping himself to ideas from Shakespeare's fantasy. Beginning with line 534, I re-read the passage which describes Satan, on mischief bent, prowling, at sunset, about the garden of the earthly paradise, while Gabriel, chief of the angelic guard, keeps watch.

It was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night;
About him exercised heroic games
The unarmed youth of Heaven

Immediately I was struck by the curious parallel that shaped itself, in my fancy, between the spirit Gabriel, sitting on a "craggy cliff," watching the heavenly youth at their games, and the fairy king, Oberon, sitting "upon a promontory," and hearing

A mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet¹ and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the sea-maid's music.

¹Milton has already used "dulcet" in Book I, 712:

"with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet."

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The next four lines from Milton—

But nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sunbeam swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night—

confirmed my suspicion; not only because Uriel's passage thus described, repeats the motive of

Certain stars shot madly from their spheres;

but also because the connection of Uriel's flight with "diamond flaming spears" brings those lines very close to another couplet, from that same speech of Oberon:

But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon.

By this time it became clear to me that Milton, in his fourth book, was doing, with Shakespeare's fairies, precisely what, in his first book, he had done with Homer's nymphs.¹ That fact once established, the succeeding parallels come leaping to the eye, while Milton continues to draw material from that first scene of the second act of *The Dream*, which has been continuously present to his memory. The passage:

I described his way
Bent on all speed, and marked his aery gait,

¹*Odyssey*, VI, 110, where, though all the nymphs of Diana are beautiful, Diana herself outshines them all. That passage gives Milton the well-known lines:

"Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst outshine
Myriads though bright."

But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted—

is an elaboration of

Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell;

and Uriel's charge to Gabriel: "Him thy care must be to find," echoes Oberon's charge to Puck, to "Seek (Demetrius) through this grove."

There is no escaping the significance of these parallels; and although Milton's third wife, when questioned upon her husband's borrowings from the classics, is said to have "answered with eagerness that he stole from nobody but the Muse who inspired him,"¹ we may, without at all impugning the lady's good faith, feel reasonably sure that her loyalty had outrun her knowledge.²

After line 580, Milton, still in search of Shakespearean inspiration, passes on to III, 2, of *The Dream*. Here Gabriel's, "If Spirit of other sort" matches Oberon's, "We are spirits of another sort"; and Milton's:

Hard thou know'st it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar

is a paraphrase of what was passing in Puck's mind, while Lysander was vainly following, and blindly striking at, the invisible and elusive sprite,

¹Thomas Newton's edn., *Life of Milton*, p. lxxx.

²In Book IX, lines 20-24, Milton refers to the

answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplored,
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse.

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whose challenge he was mistaking for that of Demetrius.

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

Puck. Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?

Lys. I'll be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me, then

To plainer ground

[Exit LYSANDER, as following the voice.]

Continuing these coincidences (line 597):

The clouds that on his western throne attend
probably "remember"

At a fair vestal throned in the west;
and this passage

Till the Moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw

comes from Oberon's speech (II, 1), that Milton has already drawn from:

Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon.

Not, however, until we reach the description of Adam and Eve's blissful bower, in their earthly paradise (line 684), does Milton's strange indebtedness to Shakespeare, hereabouts, become most striking and apparent; when we realize that these scenes are drawn from the descriptions of Titania's bower, in the Athenian wood. The passage:

Oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,

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With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number joined, their songs
Divide the night—

recalls

Come now, a roundel and a fairy song:
and these lyrical lines, concerning our first
ancestors' first home:

The roof

Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses and jessamine,
Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem—

seem to be an adaptation of

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine—

The lines following immediately upon the last
quoted passage:

Other creatures here,
Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none

are, manifestly, a new version of

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs be not seen;

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and for Pan, in the next few lines, we may read Puck; while the description of Adam's helpmeet, reposing:

Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve decked her first nuptial bed—

seems to have been suggested by

There sleeps Titania, sometime of the night
Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight.

Thence, onward, I cannot detect any further plagiarisms, on Milton's part, from Shakespeare, until after line 760, when a careful consideration of the following passage shows that it is based, probably, upon the last act of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Here Milton, in fact, very characteristically is comparing the serene happiness of domestic love—

Founded in reason, loyal, just and pure—
with the meretricious delights, and artificially
sensuous pleasures, that are called for in the courts
of kings.

Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots—loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mixed dance or wanton mask, or midnight ball,¹

¹David Masson, in his edition of *Paradise Lost*, III, 178, has a note concerning this line. "The general puritanism of this passage is obvious;" but it is to be remembered that Milton had seen masques acted, and had himself written two of a peculiar kind, both acted—*Arcady* and *Comus*. Professor Masson, it seems, has not observed the borrowing from *A Dream*, and the implied criticism of Shakespeare that lies behind it.

Or serenade, which the starved lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain

Throughout all this passage the echoes of Theseus's palace, are heard, vaguely, perhaps, yet distinctly enough to be recognizable. The "constant lamp," and the "purple wings," recall the winged fairies flitting, with "glimmering light," through the sleeping chambers; the revels, court amours, dance, mask, and midnight ball, referred to by Milton, are echoes of those entertainments asked for by Theseus (V, 1):

The. Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?
Call Philostrate.

Phil. Here, mighty Theseus.

The. Say, what abridgement have you for this evening?
What masque? what music? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

and the

Serenade which the starved lover sings
we have heard before, and never tire of hearing;
sung, however, in the original, by no "starved lover"; but by fairy voices, at the bidding of their king:—

First rehearse your song by rote,
To each word a warbling note;
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
We will sing, and bless this place

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And as for this, concerning the nuptial slumbers of Adam and Eve:

These, lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
Showered roses, which the morn repaired—

it seems to be a blend of:

Philomel with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby.—(*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, II, 2.)

and of the couplet, already quoted:

There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lulled in these flowers with dances and delight.

All this description, by Milton, of the setting of the night watch, has, I think, the same origin. Take, for example, this passage:

The Cherubim
Forth issuing at the accustomed hour, stood armed
To their night watches in warlike parade.

These winged creatures, wheeling to the four points of the compass, are a grandiose, Miltonian development of Shakespeare’s delicate and ethereal spirits commissioned to guard the palace:

Now, until the break of day
Through the house each fairy stray—

and Gabriel’s instructions:

Leave unsearched no nook,
But chiefly where these two fair creatures lodge,
But laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm—

would have been differently worded, I think, had

not Milton had in mind the most sweetly magical ending that ever was written, by any hand, to any play.

With this field-dew consecrate,
 Every fairy take his gait;
 And each several chamber bless,
 Through this palace, with sweet peace;
 And the owner of it blest
 Ever shall in safety rest.
 Trip away; make no stay;
 Meet me all by break of day

Thenceforward, for nearly two hundred lines, no Shakespearean influence is visible; but, towards the end of this fourth book, Milton, as though seeking inspiration for a happy close, turns once more to *The Dream*, and with the curious expression, "Mooned horn" (879) recalls, not very appropriately:

This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;

Later, having reached the end of *The Dream*, before the end of his desire to borrow from it, he reverts again to that scene in Act II, in which his borrowings began.

The careful ploughman doubting stands
 Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff—

certainly echoes:

The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
 The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
 Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard;

and all this grandiose conception, of threatened strife in heaven, and of the fearful cosmic con-

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fusion that might proceed therefrom, seems to have been wrought out of those simple, familiar, yet exquisitely graceful lines, occurring a little further on in the same speech:

The seasons alter:¹ hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
And on old Hiem's thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set: the spring, the summer,
The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.

Just as the fairy strife changed, upon this earth,
the seasonal round; so the war in Heaven threatened
the cosmic order.

Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued; nor only Paradise,
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heaven perhaps, or all the Elements
At least, had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn
With violence of this conflict. . . .

Even the last line of the book—

And with him fled the shades of night—
raises, in my ears, at any rate, another melodious
echo of Shakespeare's darling sprites:

the fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,

¹The reference is probably to the unseasonable weather of the spring and summer of 1594, commented on in Stowe's Chronicle, and elsewhere.

From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream, . .

I cannot detect in the other books of *Paradise Lost* any substantial indebtedness, by Milton, to Shakespeare; but I have, I submit, shown that, for his fourth book, even he did not disdain to seek the man to whom in these pages we have so often seen Jonson also, and lesser poets, paying the homage of imitation.

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